

Chapter One: Reversal of Time

Harry Potter staggered down the pathway, a sickening gash dripping blood from the side of his right leg, slowing his movement substantially. It had been nearly ten years since the Ministry had deemed Voldemort back and since that moment in time; Voldemort and his Death Eaters tore through any who opposed them like a hot knife through butter. Harry barely managed to survive a vicious attack nearly five years ago that wiped out nearly everyone in the Order of the Phoenix. Everyone who was not killed was taken as prisoners and Harry suspected they were long dead by now. The screams of terror still were etched in Harry's mind but most times Harry found himself emotionally detached

"Potter, give yourself up!" yelled a harsh male voice. "We killed nearly all the rebels. You are the only one who is taking up this fruitless endeavor in combating the Dark Lord."

"INCEDIO!" screamed Harry sending jets of fire towards the Death Eaters at the end of the pathway, knocking several of them back with severe third degree burns. Harry kept on the move, as such an assault would only slow down his attackers slightly.

"AVADA KEDAVRA!" yelled another Death Eater but Harry managed to throw himself on the ground and the spell sliced a tree in half crudely. Harry pulled his wand out and quickly used an unlocking charm to open the shack he was heading to. After stepping inside, Harry stepped inside, sealing the door shut before putting up a light anti-Apparition Ward that would only hold the Death Eaters for a few moments.

A loud crashing sound open as the back window in the shack blew open, causing pieces of glass to fly towards Harry. A couple of Death Eaters managed to squeeze towards the window and Harry found that the front door blasted directly open and more Death Eaters poured in.

"Potter, Potter, Potter," drawled a voice. "I am afraid you've run out of room."

“You think so, Malfoy,” replied Harry crisply before reaching into his robe and pulling out a vial of a black potion that bubbled sinisterly before popping it open and placing it at his lips. “Any of you move and I drink this magic degeneration potion.”

The Death Eaters gasped in shock at the Boy-Who-Lived, the only one left to stand against the Dark Lord would dare drink such a dark potion. If he ingested that potion, it would cause his magic to expand in his body before exploding at the force of a high powered Muggle nuclear bomb.

“He wouldn’t dare drink that?” asked one of the Death Eaters in a shocked voice.

“You’re bluffing Potter!” yelled Draco Malfoy but there was something in his voice that suggested he wasn’t so sure.

Harry held the vial between his fingers in a way where if anyone tried to summon it away from him, at least some of the potion would splash into his mouth.

“Maybe, maybe not, Draco,” replied Harry coldly before looking around. “I’m quite disappointed that your glorious leader did not see it fit to show up and kill me.”

“Your disappointment shall be short lived, Potter,” hissed a cold voice and Lord Voldemort appeared with his Death Eaters bowing to the ground at the presence.

“Good morning, Voldemort,” said Harry cheerfully. “The weather we’ve been having is quite dreadful isn’t it?”

“Your flippant comments are not a way to ensure a quick and merciful death, Potter,” hissed Voldemort. “You dare mock Lord Voldemort?”

“Why not?” asked Harry in an indifferent voice. “I don’t care if I die anymore, I don’t have anyone to protect. I’m sure there are scattered pockets of resistance who are cowering in some hole doing their best Wormtail impression, but why should I bother with them? You had every opportunity in the world to kill me yet you failed each and every time.”

The Death Eaters hissed angrily as Harry looked at Voldemort with a smirk.

“My final act in this world before I die is seeing you crumble at the very feet of your followers, like many tyrants have before you,” said Harry as he taunted Voldemort with the magic degeneration potion.

“AVADA KEDVARA!” yelled Voldemort but Harry anticipated this move and Harry tipped the contents of the vial down his throat. The curse vanished in mid air as Harry’s body began to glow.

“Death Eaters, retreat!” hissed Voldemort but it was too late. Much too late. Harry’s body illuminated before a loud explosion went off that could be heard in every direction.

Harry Potter’s eyes flickered open slowly, his head ringing madly from the potion he ingested. The after life did not seem to be all it was cracked up to be. Harry had expected not to feel any pain but yet he had a stabbing pain in his head that was slowly going away.

As he raised his arms, Harry could not help but noticing his arms seemed lighter than usual. He shook his head lightly before deciding to properly open his eyes.

Harry seemed to be back in his cupboard at Number Four Privet Drive. Quite frankly, he was at a loss to figure out what he could have possibly done to land himself what could only be hell.

“BOY!” yelled the shrill voice of one Petunia Dursley.

“Yes, home sweet hell,” muttered Harry and he stopped shortly. That definitely wasn’t the voice he left with. It was a child’s voice in fact.

“BOY!” continued Petunia as she wrenched the cupboard door open and stuck her horse face inside, causing Harry to recoil in fear. Not because he was scared of his aunt mind you but because she only had a face that a mother could love.

“Yes, Mr. Ed er Aunt Petunia,” replied Harry in a sweet innocent voice.

“Don’t you dare play innocent with me, boy!” yelled Petunia. “My precious Dinky Diddydums scraped his knee outside and I know you are responsible for this.”

Harry just rolled his eyes.

“Look, I’ve been in this cupboard for the past five minutes, before that I was fighting...” remarked Harry before it struck him. “Of course, time travel!”

“What are you blathering on about?” demanded Petunia.

“Time travel, going back in time, rewinding your life, putting your future self into the past, you know time travel” muttered Harry, waving his hand dismissively while shutting his eyes. “Which means I goofed the potion, wouldn’t have been the first time I was sent back in time due to some incomprehensible fluke but that was a road that I preferred not to go down once again.”

Petunia just slowly backed away from her nephew. He was babbling about something because of his freakiness. Vernon would straighten the boy out when he got back from work, her husband would not be intimidated by the boy’s random nonsense.

“Carry the three,” continued Harry underneath his breath before opening his eyes. “I have to be at least five, maybe six, seven at the most.”

Harry placed his head in his hands, shaking his head. Even though his sanity had been somewhat compromised by frequent exposure to the Cruciatus Curse, Harry came to the unfortunate conclusion that there may not have been any way to return back to his own time. The Boy-Who-Lived sighed in agitation, if he had to live through this life again, he might have to take up drinking.

Harry heard a loud car door closing outside and the loud footsteps of Uncle Vernon walking up the pathway. There was no way he was going to stick around at Number Four Privet Drive for any longer than he had to.

“Vernon, the boy is acting all loopy again,” said Aunt Petunia from outside Harry’s cupboard.

“It must be his fault that I was passed up for that promotion at work!” yelled Vernon and Harry could almost sense his uncle’s face going purple, even though he could not see it. “I’ll be having words with the boy!”

Harry’s cupboard was wrenched open and his uncle’s purple face jammed inside.

“Boy!” yelled Vernon.

“Uncle Vernon!” replied Harry, matching his uncle’s tone but he could not in a million years make his face as purple as Vernon’s.

“I lost a promotion at work because of you, boy!” yelled Vernon as he raised his ugly fist in the air, shaking it in a cartoonish manner.

Harry shook his head; he wasn’t going to stick around for this a second time around.

“Well what do you have to say for yourself?” asked Vernon, his eyes narrowed angrily and Harry hoped he could still do magic in his younger body.

“Stupefy,” said Harry calmly and a jet of red light materialized in mid air before Vernon thumped to the ground.

Petunia screamed in horror as she saw Vernon lying on the ground motionless.

“You killed him you filthy freak!” yelled Petunia as she picked up a broom and attempted jab Harry with it which Harry found to be highly amusing.

“No, merely stunned, he should wake up on his own in a few hours, maybe a day or two, my wandless magic is a bit dodgy,” said Harry calmly.

“Don’t you dare say that filthy...that disgusting...” yelled Aunt Petunia as she held the broom in her hand.

“What magic?” asked Harry calmly. “How can I explain what type of magic I used, when you don’t want me to use the magic. I would have to pull some magical solution out to my hat, to explain magic without uttering the word magic!”

Petunia swung the broom towards Harry angrily.

“By the way do you know that witches and wizards fly on those things,” remarked Harry coolly.

Petunia gave a shriek of sudden realization and threw the broom into the air recklessly before losing her balance and stumbling to the ground much to Harry’s amusement.

“Now, Aunt Petunia, thank you for your hospitality for letting me stay in your lovely cupboard all these years, but since I know how the story could end, I need to rewrite the tale so the inevitable ending of the ultimate triumph of Voldemort will not fit,” said Harry, before he cackled for a few seconds. “So goodbye, forever, we shall not meet again.”

Harry concentrated hard, hoping he could still apparate in his younger form. Much to his pleasure, he managed to disappear, quite crudely but well enough not to get splinched.

Harry dropped straight to the ground right outside the Wizarding bank known as Gringotts. Looking around, Harry was surprised at the lack of Aurors around but then he remembered this was a different time. Voldemort was thought to be defeated, his Death Eaters were either entombed in Azkaban or maintaining the illusion that they never worked for the Dark Lord in the first place.

The golden doors of Gringotts swung open on its own accord and Harry stepped inside of the bank. Goblins walked around the perimeter of the bank, ignoring the young boy entering the bank. Harry walked towards the front desk, where a surly looking goblin sat looking at a magazine. When Harry approached the desk, the goblin

hastily put the magazine away before straightening up and staring at Harry.

"May I help you?" asked the goblin stiffly.

"I would like to know if I have any vaults," said Harry.

"And your name is?" prompted the goblin as he looked at Harry with disinterest.

"Harry Potter," replied Harry in an undertone just in case there were people nosing around that would stooge off his plans to unwelcome sources."

"Very well," replied the goblin as he stood up. "Flatfoot!"

A second goblin walked into the scene.

"Yes, Mr. Fondlemember," replied the second goblin.

"Escort this young lad to your office, to test him to see if he is really who he claims he is," said Fondlemember.

"Wait a minute, you need proof that I'm Harry Potter?" asked Harry in an incredulous voice before pulling his bangs up and revealing his lightning bolt scar. He hated to do that but he shuddered to think what tests goblins would have.

"You mutilated your forehead, so what?" declared Fondlemember coldly.

Flatfoot pulled out a sharp looking spear and aimed it at Harry's throat, backing the boy up. Several goblins watched with hungry expressions on their face. Making humans wet themselves was a favorite goblin pastime.

"If you are not this Harry Potter, whoever he might be, then you will make an excellent appetizer for our dragons," replied Fondlemember savagely.

Harry just gritted his teeth; he suspected that his chances of defeating an entire bank full of goblins were about the same as Umbridge getting lucky. He might be slightly loopy but he had not crossed into the territory of being completely insane as of yet.

“Move it, child,” said Flatfoot, pointing his spear towards Harry, backing him into office.

“Is this how you treat the defeater of Lord Voldemort?” asked Harry in a hurt voice.

“Who is this Lord Voldemort you speak of?” asked Flatfoot. “Some kind of French dessert, perhaps? We goblins do not keep up on the affairs of you foolish humans unless it concerns gold and lots of it.”

Harry sank into a chair, seeing a calendar on the wall with a moving picture of a dozen goblin warriors stabbing a wizard to death. According to the calendar, it was September of Nineteen Eighty Six, which at least solved the dilemma of Harry’s age.

“We will need to take a blood sample to verify your identity,” said Flatfoot before swiping the blade of his spear across Harry’s forearm without warning, cutting it deeply. Flatfoot grabbed Harry’s arm and dripped several drops of blood onto a piece of parchment. The parchment sizzled, causing steam to rise for it before jagged red writing materialized on it.

Harry James Potter-the heir to the prestigious Potter family fortune.

“The Potter family fortune!” yelled Flatfoot eagerly before staring at Harry and snapping his fingers, causing Harry’s arm to painlessly heal. “So, sorry to have doubted you Mr. Potter, but it is Gringotts procedure, how can we be of service to you?”

The goblin was savage to him seconds ago but now that he knew Harry had quite a substantial bit of gold, Harry could not help but notice that the goblin went out of his way to kiss Harry’s arse.

“Well, the standard withdrawal of enough galleons to pick up a few essential elements for my plan but I do have a hypothetical situation that I would like to run by you,” replied Harry calmly. “Let us say that

a wizard, slips a goblin a few hundred galleons, let's say five hundred to have a nice round number. Would that goblin be able to give that wizard a detailed blueprint of all of the wards around the Wizarding prison known as Azkaban? Wink, wink, nudge, nudge."

"That goblin may be able to acquire that information from the hall of records here in Gringotts for such a fee, hypothetically speaking," said Flatfoot with a calculating look on his face. "At the same time, also as a purely hypothetical situation, for a total of about a thousand galleons, we can slip in the blueprints to the defense wards around Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and the Ministry of Magic, if that situation does occur that is. "

"Let us go down to my vault, then," replied Harry calmly. "And who knows, maybe a thousand galleons will accidentally find their way into the hands of a certain goblin and then certain blueprint copies may find their way into my hands."

Flatfoot nodded with a greedy look in his eyes, at the prospect of being paid off with a thousand galleons. Harry's spontaneously forming plan was working out to perfection so far. At the very least, he had changed the timeline in some fashion and soon, he would break Sirius out of Azkaban and perhaps free some other guests of the prison to keep the Ministry occupied while Harry made the necessary changes to prevent Voldemort from taking over the Wizarding World this time around. If Harry had to break every rule of time travel to do so, then he was willing to take that chance. He would make fate pay for sending him back into time instead of sending him to the afterlife.

Back at Number Four Privet Drive, Petunia Dursley was cowering in the corner, rocking back and forth. The boy had disappeared right before her very eyes just like her freak sister had done on occasion. Such a form of travel was unnatural and went against everything Petunia Dursley stood for.

Her eyes darted towards the door every few seconds. The other freaks would come any second now when they realized the boy was gone. They hinted they were watching the house. Of course, Petunia never told this fact to Vernon, as she feared her husband would drop

dead of a heart attack if he realized such unnatural people could see his every waking move.

The door clicked open and in walked an elderly man with long white hair and white beard, dressed in purple robes with yellow stars adorned on them. Walking behind him was a stern looking woman with her hair up in a bun. Petunia screwed her eyes shut, hoping they would somehow, dare she say it, magically not be there.

"Petunia," said a gentle voice belonging to the freak with the long hair and beard. "You do remember me, I am Albus Dumbledore."

"I know perfectly well who you are," declared Petunia through gritted teeth. "I daydream about murdering you each and every day after you dumped that freakish boy on us and mucked up our perfect normal life."

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Dursley, I didn't quite catch that due to the fact due to temporary deafness, a common affliction in old age, I'm afraid," said Dumbledore. "Now we have found out some mysterious fluctuations of magic happened earlier today but it is of course quite difficult to slip away in the midst of a school year. Could we inquire on where Harry is?"

"The boy left," replied Petunia stiffly.

"Left?" asked Dumbledore.

"He ran off, good riddance I say, maybe we can save our precious Dudley from his contaminating influence yet," said Petunia.

"Harry left here and you did not see it fit to contact the proper authorities," said the stern woman in a disbelieving voice.

"Minerva," declared Dumbledore in a warning voice but Petunia piped up once again.

"Why should we bother the authorities with his freakiness?" demanded Petunia. "The boy left, I hope he dies on the street. He has been nothing but trouble since the first day you dumped him on our laps."

"I told you these people were unfit to look after magical children, Albus," hissed McGonagall under her breath but Dumbledore did not seem to acknowledge either of the statements made.

"Could we see young Harry's room, please?" asked Dumbledore.

"His room," said Petunia in a frightened voice.

"Yes, his room, you know the place where one sleeps at night," said McGonagall if she was addressing a young child.

"Right there," said Petunia in a shaky voice, pointing to the cupboard.

"A cupboard," said McGonagall in a dangerous voice. "YOU MADE A YOUNG BOY SLEEP IN A CUPBOARD!"

"Petunia, I thought better of you," said Dumbledore in a disappointed tone of voice that made Petunia flinch despite herself. "I surely hope you rectify this matter when we find young Harry and bring him back."

"What do you mean bring him back?" asked McGonagall and Petunia in unison with equal amounts of disgust, although for different reasons.

"I have my reasons," replied Dumbledore in a tired voice, worried about where Harry could be right now. There were still Death Eaters out there who could harm the boy and if that happened, the Wizarding World could be thrown into chaos. "I have people who are searching for Harry right now, rests assure Petunia, we shall be in touch quite soon."

Dumbledore turned to leave with a cheerful smile. McGonagall glared at Petunia in disgust for a few more seconds before walking off. Petunia sank down, dreading the inevitable return of the boy. A six year old was not going to be a match for the search party their head freak had sent out.

Not to mention Vernon was still knocked out on the floor. That Dumbledore did not have the decency to revive him.

Back at Gringotts, Harry departed from the bank, with his newly acquired blueprints, as an interested party watched from across the street.

“Well, if it isn’t the famous Harry Potter,” drawled a blond haired man under his breath, leaning against his cane with the bumbling forms of Crabbe and Goyle standing at his side. “His guardians must be unfit, letting him roam Diagon Alley alone. A boy of such power should be raised in a proper family, being taught proper ideals.”

“Malfoy, if I must intrude, good sir, but Crabbe does have a smashing good idea,” replied the voice of Goyle.

“Very well, Crabbe, what is it?” asked Lucius Malfoy, who turned to Crabbe but Crabbe just stared at him blankly. “Well, tell me you dunderhead, I haven’t got all day.”

“Crabbe cannot speak, I say, born a mute, but quite gifted at silent spellcasting, old bean, I’m sure that must have slipped your mind,” said Goyle slowly. “But Crabbe is of the idea that he and I should tale the boy, keep him in our sights, you know. Make sure he does not give us the slip.”

“A first from you two, a good idea,” replied Lucius. “I certainly hope you do not mess this up and get outsmarted by a six year old. If that happens, I may replace you with trolls. I daresay it is a step up.”

“Don’t worry we won’t lose him, my dear chap,” replied Goyle as Crabbe gave a vacant look towards Lucius.

“You peons better not mess this up, as with the Potter family fortune merged with that of the Malfoy’s, no one could oppose me,” said Lucius with a power hungry glint in his eye. “You two follow the boy; I will get these Muggle guardians of Potter investigated and deemed unfit. Then the boy will be mine.”

Crabbe and Goyle stumbled to their feet, nearly tripping over each other before they set off as young Harry Potter walked around the nearest corner.

Chapter Two: Azkaban Breached.

Harry crept around Diagon Alley, humming underneath his breath. He would not be surprised if Dumbledore had not found at that he had fled the premises of Number Four Privet Drive. Harry did not want to cause a disturbance that might alert Dumbledore of his whereabouts and send him back to the Dursleys. Harry greatly suspected that Dumbledore would have some rhetoric about keeping him safe and the first time around, Harry might have been inclined to believe that. However, that time had long since passed and Harry's view of the world differed from Dumbledore's greatly. For all of the reasons that Dumbledore could give Harry in returning to the Dursleys, Harry could give him reasons of his own to take that order and stick it directly where the sun didn't shine. Plus, Harry felt he was doing the Dursleys a big favor by leaving, because if they stayed under the same roof for too much longer, their lives would be significantly shortened.

After leaving from Gringotts, Harry picked up a few important items like some decent clothing that wasn't about four sizes too large for him, along with potions ingredients and a few select books about the subject that art of Potion brewing than Snape had ever managed to do in Harry's time at Hogwarts. If Harry had a better understanding in Potions, he would not have been in the situation he right now.

Harry moved forward on the last stop on his short trip to Diagon Alley, to obtain his wand. He pulled the hood of his cloak up, obscuring his face. His hair, eyes, and scar would be too much of a dead away to his identity. Pushing the door open, Harry walked into the dusty shop of Ollivander's. It was much like how Harry had remembered it the first time around, hundreds upon hundreds of wands on the shelves in every direction. Harry walked up to the front desk, the top of his head barely reaching it.

"Good afternoon Mr..." declared Ollivander, looking around, a bit confused. He was certain someone had walked into his shop, yet there appeared to be no one around. Ollivander began to wonder if the affects of old age were finally beginning to get the better of him.

"I'm down here," hissed a voice and Ollivander leapt with a start, before leaning over his desk and seeing the young boy who

addressed him oddly. Something about this young man was strange and decidedly different than other children his age, but it wasn't up to Ollivander to figure out precisely what.

"Ah, Harry Potter, for some reason I didn't expect you to arrive at my shop for several years yet," replied Ollivander in a mysterious tone of voice.

"I go to all the trouble of disguising myself and you don't have the common decency of not blowing my identity to the world," said Harry in a hurt voice. "Well actually it took me approximately thirty seconds to disguise myself but still I'm quite frankly insulted and I hope the knowledge I was here will not spread to anyone else."

"Don't worry Mr. Potter, I won't tell a soul, living or otherwise" replied Ollivander. "Now if you could tell me what arm your wand arm is."

"Right," answered Harry curtly and Ollivander nodded as a magical tape measure made the necessary measurements and after a couple of moments, Ollivander walked over to the shelf and began handing wand after wand to Harry.

Harry waved each and every wand in the shop, getting a sickening feeling of Deja-Vu, as Ollivander seemed to get more and more excited with each passing wand that Harry used.

"Ah, yes, let us try this one, Holy and Phoenix Feather, Eleven Inches, nice and supple, give it a wave, would you Mr. Potter?" asked Ollivander and Harry began to wave the wand, but much to his surprise, Ollivander snatched it away. "No, surprisingly not, closest yet through, I was certain this would be the one but we will keep trying, we will get you a wand yet."

More wands were waved over the next thirty to forty minutes and Ollivander looked a bit surprised that he had yet to find a match.

"Stay put Mr. Potter, I will be right back," said Ollivander and he walked towards the back room of his shop. Harry looked around, all the wands in the main shop had been tried and none of them had fit, even the one Harry had used the first time around had yielded a negative.

“Mr. Potter, I believe you will be most satisfied with this wand,” replied Ollivander, as he walked out of the back room, with a wand lying motionlessly on a pillow. “It is a wand I created years ago that can channel immense power but most wizards have trouble even touching it. I never thought a match would be found but after you went through every wand in this shop, I feel this has to be the one.”

“And if it isn’t?” asked Harry coolly.

“Then I will sell the shop and go join a Muggle nudist colony,” replied Ollivander in a serious voice. “But, I have no reason to believe I am wrong on this occasion. Give the wand a wave.”

Harry took the wand in his hand and Ollivander had a pleased expression on his face as Harry lifted the wand high. The wand illuminated with a nearly blinding light before sparks erupted from the wand, a tell tale sign that this was the one.

“Such power,” muttered Harry in a low tone of voice.

“Quite, this is an experimental wand, with two different cores from two different animals,” replied Ollivander calmly. “A dragon heartstring from a particularly lethal Hungarian Horntail and a phoenix feather from a newborn phoenix. Both are powerful cores standing alone but combined, the raw magical energy within has scary amounts of power but it takes quite the witch or wizard to use it, the power would be even more potent. I trust you will find uses for it Mr. Potter and do great things.”

Harry nodded, trying to suppress the urge to burst out and laugh maniacally, imagining all the chaos he could cause with a wand this powerful. He couldn’t wait to put it to good use and since he was technically not a student at Hogwarts yet, the Ministry of Magic couldn’t bust him for using underage magic.

“That’d be seven galleons, Mr. Potter,” concluded Ollivander and Harry hastened to pay the man before setting off, to a safe location before he proceeded to find a way and break Sirius out of Azkaban. Harry would worry about getting his hands on Wormtail later but he did not put it past the Ministry to order a Dementor to give his godfather the kiss. He would not put it past them to eliminate Sirius if

Harry made any noise about his godfather being innocent. Rat hunting could wait until a bit later.

Just a short while everyone's favorite Death Eaters, Crabbe and Goyle were on the hunt for young Harry Potter. Now while most Death Eaters were acquitted by claiming they had been put under the Imperius Curse, Crabbe and Goyle had escaped on another technicality. They were ruled to be too stupid to carry out a plan that was more complex than tying their shoes and thus there could be no possible way they could be Death Eaters. The only reason why Voldemort kept them around was purely for his own perverse amusement, as even Dark Lords needed a laugh that wasn't strictly caused by the pain and suffering of their minions. Lucius Malfoy had remained acquaintances with them so he had a perfect scapegoat for his own misfortunes.

In any event, Crabbe and Goyle were on the hunt, as Lucius Malfoy had arrived at the Ministry of Magic to persuade them to allow him custody of the Meddling-Brat-Who-Knocked-Off-The-Dark-Lord, also known as Harry Potter.

"The boy is close, Crabbe, old chap, old buddy, old bean," replied Goyle. "I do say, that little rascalion gave us the slip but we will have the last laugh. Lest we forget that Lucius warned us that a couple of common trolls. Good lord, that is such a sticky wicket, being on the bubble, chap, and being replaced by a couple of trolls. We are a pair of respected..."

Crabbe gave Goyle a blank look, stopping him in his tracks.

"Somewhat respected...oh well, we're purebloods at any rate, unless we count my great uncle's obsession with house elves, which I don't, and while we don't go back as many generations as Lucius, but we do have dashing good looks my dear fellow," said Goyle before giving a goofy grin that showed several yellow, rotting teeth. "But let us not waste much time, we need to regain track of Harry Potter or our jobs will be taken by a pair of trolls. Tally Ho!"

On the island that housed Azkaban prison, Harry Potter walked slowly through the fog, shivering involuntarily. Getting the island was not too much of a problem; it was just a matter of Apparating.

According to the blueprints, breaking into Azkaban would take a bit of time but shouldn't be too hard. The thing Harry worried about was breaking back out and getting Sirius off the island with both of their lives and souls intact. Sirius may have been an Animagus but Harry was most certainly not so he didn't have an iron clad way to get past Dementors, beyond a Patronus Charm, naturally. Harry didn't know if he had it in him to call upon a happy enough memory to drive off the Dementors in their own habitat. All the happiness was gone, filled with bitterness and rage. Quite frankly, Harry wanted to replace the memories of his first life with better memories of this one.

Still Harry wasn't going to admit defeat even with the odds against him. Impossible odds were not a valid excuse when there was a timeline to distort beyond all visible recognition. Harry studied the blue print one more time before moving around to get a fix on the weakest part of the wards in Azkaban.

At Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in an unused classroom, the remnants of the Order of the Phoenix had met on short notice. They talked quietly, Dumbledore had told them to meet him on short notice and had stressed it was a matter of greatest urgency. The dozen or so people who remained in the Order muttered as Dumbledore walked into the classroom slowly, looking as if he had aged thirty years in the span of a few hours.

"Good evening everyone," declared Dumbledore in a tired voice. "I have called you all today for a colossal emergency involving one Harry Potter."

The members of the Order gasped, with the exception of Snape who just rolled his eyes in the back of his head.

"What did that brat do?" asked Snape calmly. "Throw a temper tantrum because he didn't get enough presents and run away from home."

"Harry ran away from his home, yes, but we are not sure of the cause," declared Dumbledore in a tired voice. "I do not need to stress to you that Harry must be found at all costs and returned to his legal guardians where he'd be safe."

“Exactly where are we to return Harry to, Albus?” asked Remus Lupin, in a casual voice. Dumbledore had never told Remus where Harry was sent after Lily and James were murdered by Voldemort. According to Dumbledore, it was for Harry’s own safety but there had to have been some reason why Harry had run away from home.

“Now, Remus, we’ve been over this, Harry’s location is confidential information that only a select few are privy to,” said Dumbledore in a kind voice.

“I’ll respect that for now Dumbledore, providing you did not send him to Lily’s sister and her husband, as I did hear Lily and James inexplicitly tell you that Harry was not to be sent there under any circumstances,” replied Remus calmly, as Dumbledore looked a bit uncomfortable for a split second but managed to look calmly.

“I did not send Harry anywhere that would put his life in grave danger,” replied Dumbledore calmly. “He would be perfectly safe and he is no doubt lost and scared, having had a disagreement with his family. All families go through it from time to time and children due run away on occasion. It’s nothing sinister I assure you. Now, I would like all of you to keep an eye out for Mr. Potter and do whatever you can to convince the boy to return to me.”

The members of the Order of the Phoenix nodded, some more reluctant than others as they left. Dumbledore sat back with a tired look on his face. Dumbledore felt that it was crucial that Harry was returned to the Dursleys to get him where he needed to be when he returned the Wizarding World. There were times where the Headmaster wished that it had been different but Harry was the only one that could rid the world of Voldemort once and for all. Many had to die so others could live and Dumbledore was willing to use a young boy as a pawn to ensure the safety of the whole of Magical Britain.

Outside of the stone walls of Azkaban, Harry Potter crept around, jabbing his wand at the wards, attempting to break them down. He had been at this process for nearly a half of an hour and that particular section of the wards was close to breaking. A crunching noise echoed through Harry’s ears as the ward contorted more and more until a large burst of magic blew Harry backwards. Harry pulled

himself to his feet and he felt he had sliced through the wards. The magic around the prison would replicate itself within fifteen minutes, give or take a few seconds by Harry's calculations.

Harry twisted his arm, pointing directly at the wall of the prison, which looked to have a few magical reinforcements of its own; even through it was not as strong as the actual security wards around the prison.

"REDUCTO!" cried Harry, managing to blow a small hole through the wall of the prison, large enough for Harry to slip through.

Pushing himself through the hole, Harry ended up in the prison, before pulling out the blueprints of the prison to consult them. According to them, Harry would have to move three corridors down to the right before taking a left, and then slide down an incline before he reached the high security prisoners of Azkaban. Harry hoisted his wand in the air, ready to produce a Patronus at the first instance of trouble before moving as quickly as possible. As he moved closer to the high security prisoner wing, the air got colder, and the fog became thicker. Dementors were close but Harry wasn't quite sure where as they moved around the prison frequently, but there was always a couple dozen Dementors hanging around close to the high security prisoners.

At Malfoy Manor, Lucius Malfoy arrived home to grab his best cloak before arriving at the Ministry of Magic. He needed to give his monthly donation to charity at any rate so it would be a perfect time to let the Ministry know of his views about Harry Potter. Lucius was about ready to depart when a house elf popped into his bedroom chambers.

"Master Lucius, Dobby be sorry for the interruption but he be telling you that a Mister Sevvv Snape has popped into the Floo and he would like to have a word with Master Lucius, sir" replied Dobby in a hyperactive voice, bowing madly.

Lucius nodded his head coolly before turning to his house elf.

"Dobby, I'm afraid you did not bow low enough," replied Lucius in a bored voice.

Dobby's eyes widened before he snapped his fingers and a leather strap appeared in mid air in the house elf's hand.

"Bad Dobby, Bad Dobby!" chanted the house elf as he whipped himself with the strap much to the pleasure of his master.

Lucius walked down the hallway from his room to his sitting room before seeing the head of Severus Snape in the fire.

"Lucius, you asked me to inform you if something strange has happened," said Snape calmly. "Well, I thought you and perhaps your associates might find this information interesting."

"Proceed, Severus," replied Lucius.

"Harry Potter has apparently run away from home and the Headmaster does not know where the brat is," said Snape.

"I am aware of this, Severus, I spotted the boy in Diagon Alley and I have ordered Crabbe and Goyle to tail the boy, not to let him out of his sights," replied Lucius.

"You trusted Crabbe and Goyle to not bumble up an order more complex than breathing," replied Snape in a disbelieving voice. "One of them can't read and the other cannot talk. You would be well served in sending that house elf of yours to follow Potter instead."

"Dobby, that would be a worst idea than sending Crabbe and Goyle," replied Lucius. "The bloody elf worships Harry Potter. He would probably ask Potter for his autograph and blow the entire mission. And if I am to convince the Ministry to make Narcissa and me, Potter's new guardians, I don't need the boy running off because of a house elf."

"Potter's legal guardians," replied Snape slowly. "Lucius, why on earth would you want to adopt the spawn of James Potter?"

"I have my reasons, and if you knew how much the Potter family fortune was worth, you'd want to do so too," replied Lucius.

"The thought that I'd adopt a brat, especially a Potter, for whatever reason is even more ludicrous than those rumors about the Malfoys having veelas in their family line," replied Snape in acidly.

"Those foolish rumors, as if the Malfoy line is anything but pureblood and pure human," drawled Lucius in a disgusted voice. "I'll have unlimited influence thanks to all the money, and I'd be able to buy an army to cleanse the Wizarding World of Mudbloods and other filth. I will succeed where the Dark Lord ended up failing."

"The Dark Lord would remove your tongue if he heard you speaking such blasphemy," said Snape.

"Well, the Dark Lord unfortunately is no longer with us, so another will have to take up his noble crusade," said Lucius. "I trust I can count on you Severus."

"Of course Lucius and if I learn anything further from Dumbledore, the information will be passed along as soon as I receive it," replied Snape and with that, the head of Snape disappeared from the fire.

Lucius shook his head, amused slightly about how Snape couldn't put aside old grudges for the sake of financial gain. That was too bad for Snape and all too good for Lucius, as Severus Snape's loss would be Lucius Malfoy's gain on this night.

Back at Azkaban, Harry slid down the incline, before landing with a thud in a corridor that was obscured by fog. Harry felt weak and he pointed his wand forward, where a trio of Dementors was gliding towards him.

"Happy thoughts, happy thoughts, happy thoughts," muttered Harry as the Dementors glided closer, their rattling breath causing Harry's skin to chill. Harry raised his wand, shakily, he hoped this would work. "EXPECTO PATRONUM!"

A light Patronus blasted out of Harry's wands, not bad for something with no happy memories behind it. Harry needed to come up with something quick and he looked forward, at a large metal gate. Behind it there were several prisoners, muttering underneath their breaths.

“DIFFINDO!” yelled Harry, slicing the gate in half, allowing several of the prisoners to rise shakily to their feet and the Dementors moved in to subdue the prisoners. Harry knew that a few weak prisoners wouldn’t deter Dementors for long so he ran down the hallway before lifting his wand into the air. “EXPECTO PATRONUM!”

Another patronus was blasted into the hallway; this one looked brighter and a bit more defined. The Dementors were stalled and Harry looked forward in the last cell at the end of the corridor, slightly cut off from everyone else in the prison. A grubby looking man with filthy looking black hair leaned against the wall, a slightly blank look in his eyes. Harry recognized the man at once as his godfather.

“Sirius,” muttered Harry, pointing his wand over his shoulder as his Patronus seemed to fade. “EXPECTO PATRONUM!”

Another patronus and Harry clutched onto the wall to keep himself from collapsing. A six year old body wasn’t meant to do that many spells. In fact, it wasn’t mean to do any spells at all. Harry looked in the cell where Sirius had leaned against the wall.

“Sirius!” yelled Harry and the man’s eyes flickered open in recognition.

“Who’s there?” asked Sirius in a slightly slurred voice, the effects of around the clock exposure to Dementors apparent.

“No time for explanations, you need to change into your Animagus form now,” declared Harry curtly, as his knees buckled and he clutched onto the bars of Sirius’s cell to hang on.

“How do you know about...” started Sirius but Harry lifted his hand to silence him.

“Just do it, Sirius, you’ll be able to leave this place,” replied Harry. “Trust me.”

Sirius closed his eyes and a black dog with grubby fur stood where he once stood. Harry looked up and it seemed the Dementors were closing in on Harry, one of them lowering the hood of its cloak.

“No, not this way,” muttered Harry as he waved his wand frantically. “EXPECTO PATRONUM! SUPREMUS ATERRO INFLATUS!”

The first spell obviously sent a patronus which caused Harry to slump against the wall. The second spell sent a large jet of black light, blowing up the entire left side of the high security prison ward, knocking several prisoners backwards towards the icy waters below. The Dementors floated around, subduing those who still had not been knocked out of the prison from the blast.

“C’mon Sirius, there’s only one way out of here, but it’s rather...wet,” replied Harry, rushing towards the edge of the blasted out wall and leaping downwards rather crudely towards the water. Sirius leapt down, splashing into the water. The two swam a little ways before reaching land. Without any hesitation, Harry apparated both himself and Sirius to a safe location, the last place anyone who knew Sirius would think to look.

The two had arrived outside of Number Twelve Grimmauld Place. Harry shuddered, the place was more horrible then he had remembered. The shock of Apparation had turned Sirius back to his human form.

“KREACHER!” yelled Harry and the form of Kreacher the House Elf appeared, looking at Harry with a befuddled look.”

“Kreacher wondered who called him and why Kreacher felt so compelled to arrive at his orders,” replied Kreacher before looking down at the form of Sirius with contempt. “Is that the Blood Traitor, young mysterious master?”

”Yes, this is Sirius, I broke him out of Azkaban and I am ordering you to take him inside and allow him to recover,” replied Harry. “Make sure no one from the Ministry of Magic finds him. Is that clear, Kreacher?”

“Yes, mysterious master who Kreacher has never seen before today but has a strong, compulsion to obey,” replied Kreacher, bowing. “Mistress will be most displeased but...”

“Your Mistress is a painting and thus she doesn’t have the ability to give you clothes as I do,” said Harry coldly. “So, I suggest you do as I say or else.”

“Right, mysterious master, sir, Kreacher is on it right away,” yelped the house elf in a fearful voice as he took Sirius and popped inside the house.

Harry did wonder why he was able to boss Kreacher around. He suspected it had something to do with the fact that he inherited the elf from Sirius the first time around and the magic binding the house elf to Harry rolled over but whatever the reason, Harry wasn’t going to look a gift house elf in the mouth.

Plus, it would allow Harry to gain some semblance of retribution for Kreacher leading Sirius to his death.

Around this time in a limousine in London, a well dressed gentleman with black hair that had slight hints of gray turned his neck to turn to his associate, an equally well dressed gentleman with light brown hair, with two of his fingers on his right hand missing.

“That’s the boy we’re looking for, Antonio,” replied the man with the missing fingers, showing him a picture of one Harry Potter.

“The grandson of Boss Evans, a boy known as Harry Potter” replied Antonio Parzinno. “You sure that’s him Knuckles.”

“Crystal clear, a couple of our men saw Harry Potter earlier today in London but he seemed to vanish into thin air,” declared the man known as Knuckles. “If I thought such a thing ain’t possible, I would have thought it was some kind of hocus pocus magic.”

“Never mind how he disappeared, we need to find him,” replied Antonio. “It was a damn shame that Lily and her husband were iced before she could take her place as head of the family. Sweet little girl, used to make good lemonade for us when her father held meetings, but she had a temper to rival the boss. Ruthless but fair, was the old boss. Still we went five years without an Evans as head of the crime family and we need a leader, because our rival Boss Zabini and his mobsters are giving us trouble, they are trying to take over our turf

and we can't beat them. It's almost like they are using magic to gain an upper hand."

"Didn't Boss Evans have another daughter besides Lily?" asked Knuckles.

"Yeah, but she decided to marry that Dursley goon, who Boss Evans did not approve of, so he disowned her shortly thereafter," replied Antonio. "A six year old may not be the best choice but it will present the chance to have a unified front and Boss Zabini might step off of us a little bit."

The two mobsters drove around London, continuing the search for the boy they hoped would agree to join their crime family.

Back in Grimmauld Place, Sirius Black's eyes opened and looked around frantically. He had a feeling he was under some kind of Dementor enhanced hallucination, making him relive the hell hole that he hoped to never return to.

"Excellent, you're awake, Sirius" said a voice and Sirius looked up, not believing his eyes. He thought the Dementors were really taunting him.

"James?" croaked Sirius before getting a hold of himself. This was a young boy, no older than six or seven years old. Plus his eyes were a different color.

Lily's eyes in fact. Sirius could scarcely believe it but he could think of no other explanation.

"Harry?" asked Sirius.

"In the flesh," replied Harry.

"How did you know who I was, I haven't seen you since..." replied Sirius before trailing off, softly. "What exactly is going on here? There is no way could have known all the stuff you have and besides, a child couldn't have broken into Azkaban. Hell, an adult can barely break into that place."

“It’s a long story, and it begins with events that will no longer take place twenty years from now,” began Harry.

Chapter 03: Evading Capture

Sirius looked slightly confused at those words from Harry and rightfully so, so Harry decided to elaborate.

“Voldemort, who is unfortunately not dead, and his Death Eaters had wiped out pretty much all who opposed them in the early part of the twenty first century,” continued Harry. “Things were bad, Hogwarts was flattened, The Ministry was steamed rolled, The Order of the Phoenix were obliterated, Diagon Alley was in virtual ruins, and Gringotts was a crater, even though the goblins held on to the bitter end, taking several Death Eaters with them. Basically, the first war was nothing compared to the terror that Voldemort had created during his second reign of power.”

“Wait a minute, Harry, let me see if I’m correct,” said Sirius slowly. “From what you’re telling me, there can only be two possible explanations. Either you’re a seer or you found some way to return to your younger body.”

“Negative on the seer, and only partially right on the second explanation,” answered Harry calmly. “The truth is, I never wanted to go back in time but the potion I made that would wipe the Death Eaters and Voldemort out, even if it would destroy my mind, body, and soul and thus systematically wiping me out of existence.”

“Do you have any idea how the potion went so wrong from the intended aim?” asked Sirius, who looked a bit unnerved about the last ditch effort that Harry had to take but it seemed to be an unfortunate necessity based on the short explanation that Harry gave on the future that would hopefully no longer exist.

Harry pondered that question for a few seconds before the explanation came to mind quickly.

“That bloody prophecy!” exclaimed Harry in an angry voice.

“Prophecy...this wouldn’t be by any chance the same prophecy that was the reason that Lily and James went into hiding, was it?” asked Sirius.

"If it's the one detailing that I have to kill Voldemort or he has to kill me, then yes," answered Harry. "Apparently fate disagrees that turning my body into a magical nuclear weapon and causing it to explode in a room full of Death Eaters does not qualify as strictly killing Voldemort."

"Instead it caused your older self to enter your six year body and thus technically even through you are six years old on the outside, your mind is twenty years older," summarized Sirius.

"Yes and no," said Harry which caused Sirius to raise his eyebrows in confusion. "Much like many things in life, it is not as cut and dried as that. My six year old self is still in this body alongside by twenty six year old personality. At times my older self will influence my actions, at times my younger self may be held accountable for what I do or maybe there will be times where there is a happy medium between the two. At least that's what I've figured, I could be just grasping at straws. Like, when I busted you out of Azkaban, I knew I needed an idea of the layout of the prison but at the same time, my execution was a bit sloppy and spontaneous, like a six year old might have been. It did the job as you're no longer in Azkaban but barely."

Harry just put his hand over his scar.

"I'm back in time, reliving this life, but at least things will be different this time," said Harry. "For instance, you weren't supposed to escape Azkaban until just before my third year in Hogwarts."

Sirius gave an involuntary shudder at the thought of staying in that place seven more years. Almost five had been bad enough but twelve seemed to be even more hellacious.

"You said that all of the Order of Phoenix were wiped out," said Sirius slowly. "I apologize for sounding so morbid, but exactly what happened to me."

"You dueled with Bellatrix in the Ministry and was knocked through the Veil of the Abyss by a simple stunner," replied Harry.

Sirius made a mental note to stay away from any veils, especially if he was dueling with Bellatrix.

"That's done however, the past can be remapped into something that does not have Voldemort conquering all of Magical Britain," said Harry calmly. "I need to get my hands on the rat, of course, to get your name cleared. I just got to make a trip to collect him"

"You know where Peter is!" exclaimed Sirius, with a slightly murderous glint in his eyes that worried Harry. It was apparent that his godfather wanted to commit the crime that got him thrown into Azkaban.

"Yes, I do but Sirius, you really don't need to concern yourself with Peter right now," replied Harry coolly. "It shouldn't be too much trouble for me to get my hands on the rat; it's the matter of somehow making sure the Ministry takes him in without laughing in my face or worse, trying to send me back to the Dursleys."

Harry paused before he decided to continue to speak.

"But I have a couple of errands that I have to run before I capture Wormtail," declared Harry. "Voldemort used something very important to return to his body last time, well actually three important things, but only one of them was unique so that is what I need to eliminate to stall the inevitable."

"Before you leave, Harry, can I ask you one other thing?" asked Sirius.

"I guess you can," answered Harry.

"Are you going to tell anyone else about the fact you have two separate personalities in your body?" asked Sirius.

"I plan on telling Remus Lupin but I'm not sure if I can trust anyone else that I was close to the first time around," said Harry before muttering, "Even her."

"Who's her, Harry?" asked Sirius, his eyes lighting up with a mischief that showed there was still a Marauder buried through all of the years of terror he suffered at the hands of Dementors.

"Never you mind, Sirius," said Harry shortly, slightly blushing.

"No seriously, Harry, was this mysterious "her" your girlfriend?" prompted Sirius.

"Maybe she was, maybe she wasn't, it doesn't really matter Sirius, the timeline has changed and for all I know, she end up becoming one of my mortal enemies," remarked Harry. "Now if you excuse me, I have a grave to besmirch."

Harry turned his back, before disappearing towards the gravesite where Lord Voldemort's father was buried.

At the Ministry, Lucius Malfoy waited inside an office right off to the side of the Department of Records. His contact within the Department had given him some interesting information that he could use to get his hands on Potter. The fact remains that the boy's parents did not want him to be sent to Vernon and Petunia Dursley for the simple fact that they were against everything magical. It seemed they loathed magic as much as most proper purebloods despised Muggles.

"Mr. Malfoy, I believe your request for guardianship for Harry Potter is something that the Ministry would not challenge, due to the fact you are a respected member of our society and the fact that the boy appears to have been put in an unsuitable home," replied the department official. "You will need to petition the Wizengamot for custody, naturally but you may run into a snag."

"What sort of a snag, Mr. Rollins?" asked Malfoy calmly.

"For one, Albus Dumbledore may want to send the boy back to the Muggles and there are many within the Ministry who would throw themselves off of a bridge if Dumbledore asked them to," answered Rollins. "And the fact remains, you said you saw Harry Potter roaming Diagon Alley and that was hours ago. Is there anything to indicate that young Mr. Potter hasn't moved elsewhere?"

"I have a couple of my associates keeping the eye on the boy, he should not have went far," drawled Lucius calmly. "I trust this matter will be resolved and the boy will be removed from his unfit guardians. I am sure you would agree that I have the best interests of young Harry in mind and would hate to see anyone use him as a tool for nefarious purposes."

“Absolutely, Mr. Malfoy,” said Rollins, absent mindedly patting the newly acquired bulge in his pocket, causing it to jingle. “The evidence I have given to you should help you convince a good portion of the Wizengamot.”

Lucius nodded, barely concealing a grin, and at that moment, a material materialized on the desk of Rollins. Rollins picked up the memo, reading it over, before becoming grave.

“Oh my, several Death Eaters have escaped from Azkaban including....SIRIUS BLACK!” yelled Rollins in a panicked voice. “Mr. Malfoy, the Minister is calling an emergency meeting of everyone in the building, I trust you have everything.”

“Correct,” responded Malfoy and Rollins tore out of the office. Lucius Malfoy briefly glanced over the memo, it seemed as if eight Death Eaters had escaped Azkaban and an entire wall had been completely destroyed. Lucius was intrigued briefly about how these many prisoners had broken out of Azkaban in such a short amount of time but of course, he had the matter of acquiring Harry and more importantly, the massive amount of gold that came with the Potter family fortune.

Hopefully, Crabbe and Goyle didn’t do anything to bungle the operation and thus cause Lucius to miss out influencing the Boy-Who-Lived along with accessing the gold that came along with him.

At the Little Hangleton Graveyard, Harry Potter whistled merrily as he levitated bones from a dug up grave before jabbing his wand towards them. The bones exploded into dust, floating harmlessly to the ground. Harry leaned down and double checked to ensure that every bone was completely obliterated. Voldemort would not be getting back to his body using the same method he did before. Harry felt it was foolish to assume that Voldemort didn’t have other possible ways to return to his old body but at least one possible road to power would be completely barricaded.

Harry peaked over his shoulder, making sure no one had seen him before replacing the dirt and altering it to make it look as if no one had been there. With that job out of the way, Harry crept off

cautiously into the darkness, preparing to continue with the next phase of his plan.

At Hogwarts, Albus Dumbledore sat in his office, looking as old as ever. In the last couple of hours, Harry Potter had run away from his relatives and then, to complicate matters, eight Death Eaters, all in the high security wing of Azkaban had escaped. From what Dumbledore saw during his brief trip to the prison about an hour ago, it was almost like they didn't escape, but it looked as if they had been broken out of the prison. This caused Dumbledore to have more questions than he had answers. Namely, who did this and most importantly, why? According to Dumbledore's contacts, Voldemort was rumored to be in the forests of Albania, nothing more than a demonic spirit. It was true that the number of mysterious deaths close to the area where Voldemort had rumored to live.

Still, while all of the Death Eaters were dangerous in their own right, the most dangerous one had to be Sirius Black. Dumbledore felt disappointment when thinking about that traitor, as if he had not betrayed the Potters, there would have been no need for Harry Potter to be sent to the Dursleys. It also increased the urgency of the fact that Dumbledore needed to locate Harry Potter, as Black probably blamed the boy for the night that he lost everything. Black did, of course, go dark like the rest of his family and join up with Voldemort. The thought of when Dumbledore found out the Potters were betrayed by their best friend still sickened the old wizard to his stomach.

Dumbledore's head jerked up slightly at the humming sound. One of his most prominent security measures during Voldemort's reign of terror was placing security spells around the homes of several prominent light sided magical families, to alert him of any strange or unsuspected visitors. None of them knew the steps Dumbledore and the Order of the Phoenix took, but it had saved a few lives.

Dumbledore waved his wand at the glass globe that all of the security charms were keyed into. An image of the Weasley home, the Burrow flickered on the globe and Dumbledore's expression turned suddenly grave. The Weasleys have been against the dark for many years so they would surely have on the top of the list of targets by the Death

Eaters who were broken out of Azkaban. Dumbledore decided that there was no time to contact the members of the Order of the Phoenix so Dumbledore had no choice but to go it alone.

Outside the Burrow, Harry crept around, looking at the Weasley residence, trying to suppress the memories of the last time he had seen it previously. It was the summer after his sixth year of Hogwarts, and a team of Death Eaters led by Lucius Malfoy and Wormtail had destroyed the Burrow, reducing it to a pile of cinders with Ron, Ginny, Fred, George, and Mrs. Weasley inside. This was the first major strike by Voldemort, which was a clear cut message to Harry, as revenge for Harry meddling in Voldemort's plans once too often. Harry had seen the wreckage less than a week after it happened and the memories of it stuck with him for quite some time. The remaining Weasleys were picked off one by one over a period of about six months.

Harry raised his wand, brushing these thoughts aside, and opened the door with a silent "Alohomora" charm. The door of the Burrow clicked open and much to Harry's luck, there was no one home. It would make capturing the rat so much easier. Harry crept up the stairs towards Percy's room, with his wand in one hand and a net with an anti-animagus charm placed on it in the other hand.

Harry pushed the door of Percy's room open, feeling revolted at how neat and tidy it was. Even Aunt Petunia might think it was overkill and that was surely saying something. Harry crept around, looking for any sign of a rat, praying that Percy did not take the rat with him wherever the Weasleys had gone. Or Harry hadn't miscalculated the date that Percy went to Hogwarts, as his math skills were notoriously shoddy and hence one of the non-Snape related reasons that he was horrible at potions due to his miscalculations of certain ingredients.

Harry's eyes widened as he saw Scabbers the rat, or rather, Peter "Wormtail" Pettigrew, snoozing lazily in the sun, with a half eaten chunk of cheese next to him.

Harry raised his net and scooped up the rat in it.

Wormtail felt a suddenly burst of movement and his eyes opened slowly, before squeaking in horror at the sight of a homicidal six year

old. He struggled but the net contained his body. He tried to gnaw his way out but that didn't work either.

"Hello, Peter," replied Harry. "You really thought you could get away for betraying my parents or framing Sirius. Well think again."

Wormtail's squeaks increased with volume and Harry heard the door swung open. He spun around and cursed his horrid luck.

Standing inside the doorway of young Percy Weasley's room was Albus Dumbledore and he looked completely befuddled for a moment.

"Harry?" asked Dumbledore, as he caught sight of the tell tale sign of the scar that showed the young boy was Harry Potter.

"Yes," replied Harry, faking ignorance, while making a note to get that scar hidden or better yet, removed with Muggle plastic surgery. "Might I ask who you are?"

"I'm Albus Dumbledore, Harry, Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry," said Dumbledore.

"What's a Hogwarts?" asked Harry in a fake voice that made him sound as bewildered as Crabbe or Goyle. "Wait a minute witchcraft and wizardry...no stay away from me you evil, evil man."

"Harry, I'm only here to take you back to your relatives house, where you will be perfectly safe, there are bad wizards on the loose after all," continued Dumbledore, raising his wand, hoping that he wouldn't have to resort to such desperate measures.

"Aunt Petunia says all wizards are evil, demonic freaks!" cried Harry, forcing his eyes to swell up and tears to flow down their face, while inclining his head briefly to hide an evil smile and Wormtail squeaked in horror. "I did magic accidentally one time and Uncle Vernon said he would beat the evil out of me."

"Harry, I'm afraid you must have misheard your Aunt and Uncle, while some wizards and witches for that matter are less than trustworthy, most of us all right," said Dumbledore kindly. "Now, come with me, Harry, and I'll take you home."

“Was it true that my parents were nothing but drunk freaks that practiced the occult and committed bestiality that got themselves blown up in a car crash?” asked Harry in a terrified voice, enjoying the fact that the Dumbledore’s face went green. “That’s what Aunt Petunia told me.”

Dumbledore just sighed, the Dursleys had apparently filled Harry’s young mind with the most horrible of lies. When the boy was returned there, Dumbledore would be having a serious chat with the Dursleys about planting lies in the mind of an impressionable young boy.

“Harry, I can assure you your parents were good people and they would have never done such things,” replied Dumbledore calmly. “Now, I’m sure it was all a big misunderstanding and I’m sure your Aunt and Uncle are worrying very much about you.”

Harry stopped faking crying and burst out into laughter at the thought of the Dursleys worrying about his safety.

“Might I ask what is so funny about what I said, Mr. Potter?” asked Dumbledore calmly, the twinkling disappearing from his eyes.

“The Dursleys..worried...about..me,” chuckled Harry before calming himself down. “Well, I suppose they might be distressed at the loss of their little slave and their scapegoat for everything that has ever gone wrong. Let me think about returning for a few seconds....WON’T!”

“Very well Harry, you live with me with no choice,” said Dumbledore, pointing his wand at Harry.

“You think your pointy stick scares me, Professor Dunderhead,” said Harry, once again faking ignorance

“That’s Dumbledore, Mr. Potter,” replied Dumbledore calmly as he raised his wand, at Harry. “This is a wand, a tool of magic, you will learn how to use one when you come to Hogwarts, but not for another five years.”

“I look forward to it, Professor Dimeadozen,” answered Harry in a cheeky voice that he soon regretted as Dumbledore fired a stunner at him, but Harry managed to barely avoid the hex.

Unfortunately the spell knocked the net from Harry's hand and Wormtail scurried as far away from Harry as humanly possible. Harry felt the strong urge to throw something and Dumbledore's head sounded like a pretty nice target right about now.

"You stupid old man, you ruined everything!" screamed Harry, as he darted down the stairs as Dumbledore looked at his wand in shock, feeling disappointment with himself at trying to stun a young child. He was no better than Voldemort in that fact. He could just image the headlines if the parasites at the Daily Prophet go their hands in this little gem:

Senile Hogwarts Headmaster Hexes Boy-Who-Lived:

Has Dumbledore finally lost his grip on reality?

Dumbledore shuddered, the possibilities were not pretty but at the same time, he had to reason with Harry. It was now more important than ever for Harry to return to his relatives, especially with eight Death Eaters on the loose, including the traitor, Sirius Black.

Harry felt a mixture of rage and despair. Wormtail had fled into the night and he knew the rat would return, as Harry knew he had lived here. He might have been a coward, but Peter Pettigrew was far from stupid. Dumbledore had the knack of showing up at the worst possible times.

He saw Dumbledore striding out the Burrow, staring down Harry.

"Now, Harry, I'm sorry our first meeting did not get off on the right foot but you need to return to your Aunt's house, you're understand when you get older," said Dumbledore. "I don't want to do this but I will use force. It's your choice Harry."

Harry looked as if his back was against the wall. If he had disappeared, it would be too much of a dead giveaway of his current state. The only thing Harry could hope for was a miracle.

As it turned out, a limo pulled up right across the street from the Burrow. The door opened to reveal a middle aged looking man sitting

in the back. He was dressed in nice clothing and something about his appearance screamed mobster to Harry Potter.

"You the Potter kid?" asked the mobster.

"Yes, I am," replied Harry.

"Come with us, then," continued the mobster.

"Excuse me, but you have no grounds to take Harry, he's to be returned to his relatives, where he belongs," said Dumbledore, pointing his wand at the door.

"Well kid?" asked the mobster.

"Hmmm, mobsters that might want to kill me, Dursleys who I'd know would like to kill me, Mobsters, Dursleys, Mobsters, Dursleys, potential treat, or absolute threat...I'd think the mobsters would be my best bet," said Harry calmly and he found himself pulled into the back of the limo and the door slammed shut. The limo sped off, much to the dismay of Albus Dumbledore.

"Ah, Mr. Potter, I must say it is a pleasure to finally be able to conduct business with you," said the mobster. "The name's Parzinno, Antonio Parzinno. This is my bodyguard Knuckles and my other bodyguard, Shoulders."

"Charmed," said Harry, shaking hands with the mobsters, wondering exactly what this was all about. "Er, say, my father doesn't have any gambling debts, does it?"

The mobsters roared with laughter at that statement.

"You'd be surprised how often we're asked something like that," replied Antonio. "But nothing of the sort, Mr. Potter?"

"Yes, otherwise we'd be fitting you with a nice pair of cement shoes right about now," chuckled Shoulders.

"And you'd be sleeping with the fishes," replied Knuckles.

“Anyway Mr. Potter, I am the temporary boss of a rather prominent, for lack of a better term, crime syndicate, perhaps one of the most influential in all of Britain and among the top in all of Europe as well,” declared Antonio.

“Wait a minute, temporary boss,” said Harry catching onto an important detail that Parzinno said.

“Ah, inquisitive, I like that, you remind me a bit of my niece, she’s close to your age, smart girl, a bit too smart for her own good if truth to be told,” said Antonio. “Anyway, yes temporary boss because our previous mob boss had died close to seven years ago and his daughter was supposed to take over the family operation. Unfortunately, she was in hiding and then iced by some guy named Voldemort.”

Harry’s eyes widened, no surely not.

“Ah, he is a smart one, I really need to introduce you to my niece sometime, I think you two would get along great as you two seem to be a lot alike,” said Antonio. “Your grandfather, Herb Evans, had led our little organization for years and years. Unfortunately we did have our enemies and he was gunned down. Since I was his senior consultant, I filled in, since your mother was killed and you couldn’t be fined. Unfortunately, an Evans has been the head of this organization for a long time and the morale had been weakened. That led Boss Zabini to step in and take some of our territory, thus leading to a turf war.”

“Zabini’s rather paranoid if you ask me, think’s everyone’s out to get him,” supplied Shoulders.

“You’d be too if your wife was married five times previously and her former husbands all died under mysterious circumstances,” said Antonio. “Since he’s so paranoid, that makes him dangerous and we beg of you to take your rightful place as leader, Harry.”

“Doesn’t the fact that I’m only six years old, bother you?” asked Harry in a calm voice.

“Age doesn’t really matter, we need someone with the Evans family temper to run our organization,” replied Antonio. “Besides, you ain’t fooling me, you might need help evading certain individuals.”

“Like that old creep with a pointy stick,” suggested Knuckles.

Harry’s eyes widened, before he grinned thinking of the possibilities. Dabbling in Organized Crime began to look like a very attractive option. An option that never occurred the first time around and thus something

“Okay, you’ve got my interest,” answered Harry. “But, you need to hide my godfather, as he is wanted by the law and I had to break him out of jail.”

“Boss Potter, don’t worry, we can handle keeping your godfather out from under the eyes of the wrong people as well,” said Antonio. “Of course, we need to pick him up and anything else of value, before we head up to the hotel that doubles as our headquarters.”

Harry smirked, with the exception of Wormtail slipping through his fingers; everything was going well so far. The waves had had made already was sure to contort the timeline, but exactly how remained to be seen. With an entire organization of mobsters under his command, Harry had the perfect tool to make even larger waves and hopefully ensure the future that he came from would never come to pass.

Chapter Four: Malfoy for a Minute

The forests of Albania projected the atmosphere of the terrifying unknown, even to the bravest of men. Peter Pettigrew was not the bravest of men, far from it but he had few other options given recent events. His cover as the pet rat for Percy Weasley had been blown and Peter was at a loss to determine exactly how this could have happened. He had the perfect plot, sit in with a Wizarding family and listen for news that might indicate the slightest hint that the Dark Lord would return.

Unfortunately, that plan was out the window, thanks to an odd looking six year old boy, who Peter assumed was Harry Potter. How or why a child could have deduced Peter's ruse was at a loss to the rat. The only thing that was certain is if Dumbledore would not have intervened and caused Potter to inadvertently drop the net he was in, it was highly likely that Wormtail would be rotting in a jail cell in Azkaban right now. Wormtail knew he would wilt fast under the effects of the Dementors, because they would torment him with the fact that his lack of bravery had caused him to sell the Potters out and thus have a role in their murders. The fact that he cowardly framed Sirius and blew up an entire street of Muggles added to the problems. Peter did not want to step into Azkaban but he couldn't help be morbidly curious about how young Harry could have known.

With these thoughts in mind, Wormtail cautiously traveled deeper and deeper into the forest, on a mission to find his master. He could move quickly in his form but at the same time, he only had a vague idea where the Dark Lord was located within the forest. It could be a few days before Wormtail could even guess remotely close to the location where the Dark Lord was. Of course, Wormtail didn't have a choice; he needed the Dark Lord to protect him now that his cover had been blown.

The Riverfront Hotel was a building that had been abandoned for years as far as the general public was concerned. In fact, few gave the building a second look because of the simple fact it looked run down from the outside. However, the look on the outside was just to keep unwanted intruders from snooping around. The inside upkeep

on the hotel was above average, a complete opposite of what first impressions looked to be from outside of the establishment.

"I must say, Antonio, this is impressive, amazing what you can do without magic," said Harry calmly.

"Yes, it is rather impressive that magic does exist, although it explains a lot of the stranger things I've seen," said Antonio. "Also, you are saying that Dumbledore fellow put enchantments on your residence, to make sure no one found you."

"That's my guess, but to fair, Dumbledore hasn't said that, but he did say something about the blood wards shielding the house from anyone who is untrustworthy," said Harry. "Of course, he would think anyone who wanted to get me far away from that place would be untrustworthy."

"Just say the word, Harry, and we'll wipe Dumbledore out," said Antonio, who was rather appalled at the fact that someone would sent a child to a place where his guardian would force the child to live in a cupboard. Granted, he did some pretty underhanded things as a mobster, but never to children. It was mostly men who tried to flee without paying their gambling debts and rival mobsters, but innocent women and all children were considered to be off limits as far as Antonio was concerned. He had a feeling that Boss Evans was rolling over in his grave, because of the disgraceful actions of Petunia.

"Tempting, but no, well at least not yet," said Harry. "Dumbledore for all of his faults, can keep Voldemort in check somewhat. I've heard that Dumbledore is the only one that Voldemort ever feared but I'm counting on that to be true."

Antonio nodded reluctantly, Harry seemed to know more than he should have known but that wasn't his business. He was merely an advisor and his job description did not extend down to asking nosy questions.

"I must say, my new employees seemed rather pleased to meet me," continued Harry.

“We haven’t had a steady boss since your grandfather died and we’ve just been moving around in circles, losing ground to Boss Zabini for all of these years,” said Antonio. “I’m not really cut out to make big decisions, I’m just cut out to advise them, but while I am the most trusted advisor of Boss Evans, I didn’t command quite the same respect he did. Rather close, but even with your relatively young age, it shouldn’t be a problem.”

“On another note, when can expect the project I requested you guys to complete to be done?” asked Harry.

“In a few weeks, maybe up to a month, month and a half,” said Antonio. “A transmitter of that caliber will take state of the art parts and that isn’t cheap.”

“Cost doesn’t matter to me,” said Harry. “I need insurance that the Ministry of Magic will not try and make me a ward of the Ministry, prostituting my name to increase favorable public opinion. Once this transmitter gets completed, I’ll have all the leverage I need to make sure the corrupt officials at the Ministry don’t try and use me for their own gain. While I can’t have you guys kill all of the Ministry employees, I can broadcast the existence of the magical world on every radio and television station throughout the United Kingdom. “

Harry took a deep breath.

“In time, we’re going to take back the territory that Boss Zabini stole and then some,” continued Harry. “I don’t take too kindly to be the second best mob boss in Britain.”

“Your grandfather wouldn’t have either, Harry,” said Antonio as two other mobsters walked down the hallway. “Ah, Victor, Gilbert, just the two men we were looking for. How is Mr. Black enjoying his stay here?”

“Quite well actually, considering he was a bit apprehensive about us earlier, which has passed when he heard that his godson would better protected under our watch. Still, after being in that horrible prison for five years, anyplace would be better but we have some urgent news for Boss Potter here,” said Victor in a quickly. “It seems

the paper that he subscribed to recently and had sent to a neutral location has some news that you might find interesting, Boss.”

“Interesting news, hmm, it seems the Daily Prophet have picked up on the fact that I’ve left the Dursleys,” said Harry as he quickly deepened his strides towards the room in the hotel that doubled as his office. Harry stepped inside the windowless room before moving towards the latest edition of the Daily Prophet sitting on his desk. Harry grabbed the Daily Prophet before sitting down slowly in a chair and reading the headline story about himself.

Harry Potter Missing:

By Rita Skeeter

Harry James Potter, the Boy Who Lived, has officially declared missing by the Ministry of Magic. The Ministry had no clue the boy had left the home of his relatives until about a day ago when Potter was spotted roaming around Diagon Alley without any supervision by respected pureblood Lucius Malfoy. This sighting raises the concern that the guardians of the Boy-Who-Lived, Vernon and Petunia Dursley, are neglectful and abandoned the boy in London, as many as three to four days ago. This theory gains credibility because of recent information that came to light. It seems as if Lily and James Potter never wanted their son to be sent to the Dursleys in the first place. The Dursleys have strong, anti-magic attitudes that are quite frankly medieval and close minded. They are the worse kind of Muggles imaginable, the classic type that attempted to burn our kind at the stake many times over the centuries(for further details of important witch burnings throughout history, see page nine).

So one would come to the conclusion that Harry Potter, the hero who brought down He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named would be ill fitted to be sent to such Muggles. Unfortunately, Albus Dumbledore did not come to that conclusion and did in fact step in and sent the boy to his magic hating Muggle relatives. It should be noted that there are many magical families that offered to take the Boy-Who-Lived in to their homes and raise him like a member of his family, but Dumbledore chose this option. This reporter strongly believes that the Dursleys should be investigated to disprove Dumbledore’s opinion that the boy

would be safest at their home. Dumbledore also should be chastised for condemning an innocent child to Muggles with these attitudes about magic. Dumbledore has been slipping for years but this latest incident shows that Dumbledore would be served from stepping down as Headmaster of Hogwarts and away from public life.

No matter what the reason, we must ask ourselves one question. Where is Harry Potter? Many pureblooded families who are well respected have offered to adopt Mr. Potter and educate him properly about our world. Lucius Malfoy looks to be the front runner and would be an admirable guardian for the Boy-Who-Lived, giving his outstanding contributions to charity. This reporter hopes that Harry Potter can be found, before it is too late.

Harry just set the paper down, with a thoughtful expression on his face.

“So, Lucius Malfoy wants to adopt me, eh,” replied Harry. “Interesting.”

“This Malfoy guy seems like the slippery type,” supplied Gilbert. “I mean, Boss, all this donations to charity, sure, it’s for a good cause, but it is also a way to keep the law off your back.”

“Right, Harry, it’s a common tactic in our world to donate to charity to keep out of jail and if Lucius Malfoy wants to adopt you, it could be trouble,” said Antonio.

“Trouble for him,” said Harry calmly which caused the mobsters to look at him strangely. “So Lucius wants to sink his claws into me and become my guardian. I have a large amount of gold. It doesn’t take a genius to figure out what’s going on but when life gives you lemons, take the lemons and squeeze the juice into someone’s open wounds.”

“So, instead of Malfoy taking you to the cleaners, you’re going to turn the tables on him,” said Victor.

“Yes, but I need someone as tricky and underhanded as Malfoy to get the job done,” said Harry, thinking hard.

“Boss, we’ve got the perfect men for the job,” said Victor. “These two gentlemen are devious and underhanded and have worked with us before. As long as the price is right and the check clears, they can put the screws to anyone.”

“Excellent, how soon can we set up a meeting?” asked Harry.

“In a couple of hours, in fact,” declared Victor.

“Good, set it up at the earliest possible time,” said Harry calmly, cracking his knuckles. Lucius Malfoy had caused him trouble the first time around, but this time Harry would cut him off at the knees.

Inside an abandoned factory in one of the worst parts of London, Boss Edward Zabini sat in a storeroom, behind a box, with his eyes darting side to side in a paranoid fashion. His men had been gone for several hours, following a lead about a new mob boss in the rival faction. They had not returned for several hours and Boss Zabini had assumed that it was a false tip to have them ambushed by their rivals.

The door creaked open and Boss Zabini rose to his feet, with a baseball bat in one hand and a handgun in the other hand, pointing them shakily towards a door. He couldn’t be too careful, it could be his wife to knock him off and claim his money, like she did to all of her previous husbands. The only reason that she had knocked him off was because he knocked her up but still, Boss Zabini was operating under the assumption that she could kill him at any time.

Zabini relaxed his arm as he saw it was just his employees stepping into the room.

“Boss, the rumors are true, Parzinno is stepping down and a descendent of Evans is taking over the family business,” said one of the mobsters. “If you ask me, we don’t have nothing to worry about.”

“Why is that?” asked Zabini in a shaky voice. “Did my wife follow you here?”

“No, Boss Zabini, your old lady didn’t follow us, you can put down the bat boss, she’s not here,” said one of the mobsters quickly.

"Can't be too careful?" muttered Zabini, his eyes darting over the shoulders of his men quickly.

"And to answer your question," continued the mobster. "The new mob boss is nothing but a little brat."

"Ice him right away!" snapped Zabini. "He might not seem like a problem now but I said the same thing about my wife and look where I am. Whoever this child mob boss is, kill him!"

"But Boss, I doubt that..." started another mobster but Zabini pointed his gun at him before shooting him right in the chest in cold blood. The mobster fell to the ground, as the others backed off. The man laid on the floor, bleeding to a painful death as Zabini looked up at the other members of his organization, who looked more paranoid then he did.

"Does anyone else wish to disagree with me?" asked Zabini in a lethal voice and all of the mobsters shook their heads frantically. "I didn't think so. Now seek out this new boss and put him out of commission. He could cause me to lose all of the territory that I gained and I can't have that. My wife is enough to worry about and make sure you double check to make sure she didn't follow me."

His employees nodded calmly before quickly moving on to check the parameter once more.

Zabini grabbed a glass of water, before pulling out his wand and scanning it for traces of poison. His wife might have snuck in here and laced his drink with something lethal we he was meeting with his mobsters. After he checked his glass, he spun around, before firing his gun at the shadows and watching a mouse scurry away quickly at the sounds of gunshots.

Harry walked up to an impressive looking building, just a couple of streets away from the entrance to Diagon Alley, with a half a dozen of his new associates. Sirius wanted to come but Harry had put the kibosh on that. It was too risky for Sirius to be seen out in public, even in his Animagus form. He looked up at the plaque on the building which read.

The Lawfirm of Boldface and Schyster:

No Case Too Outrageous

Harry stared at the plaque for a few seconds before the door was opened, allowing him entrance. A couple of his employees stood guard outside but the others including Antonio and his two bodyguards, Shoulders and Knuckles, followed Harry inside the building to a desk where a bored looking girl with stringy blond hair in her early twenties was sitting, absentmindedly doodling on a piece of paper.

"Good afternoon," said Antonio sharply. "Boss Potter is here for his appointment to see Mr. Boldface."

"Oh, just a second," said the girl, pushing the button to activate her intercom. "Mr. Boldface, a Boss Potter and his associates are here to see you."

"Send them in," declared a calm voice on the other end of the intercom.

"Well, you heard the man, you can go in now," said the girl waving them towards the door.

Harry walked towards the door, pushing it open and seeing a midget man that was maybe a few inches taller than him, smoking a cigar, while sitting on a stack of phonebooks so he can see over his desk.

"Ah Boss...HOLY SHIT YOU'RE HARRY POTTER!" yelled Boldface, his eyes briefly flickering over the lightning bolt scar on Harry's forehead.

"You won't be the first person to say that nor you would be the last," said Harry coolly.

"And besides, Boss Potter has legitimate business to attend to," said Antonio. "So, let's not waste a minute of time and if this goes through, you will get paid handsomely."

“Yes, and what I’m going to pay you is far from loose change, if everything goes according to plan,” said Harry. “But, I’m curious, how exactly did you know who I am?”

“I am a squib Mr. Potter, which puts me in a rather unique position for my lawfirm,” said Boldface. “Both Muggle and Magical clients pass through my lawfirm, but if the price is right, I don’t complain. Still, I suspect you are here for legal protection against Dumbledore, to keep him from sending you back to your relatives.”

“Not exactly, but I’m sure you’ve heard that Lucius Malfoy has petitioned the Ministry to become my guardian,” said Harry.

“Trust me, Boss Potter, no matter who Malfoy hires to represent him in the court of law, I can chew them up and spit them out,” said Boldface. “I’ve actually got the charges dropped against some people who had to be guilty of charges. Got, your grandfather out of a tight spot a couple of times and Malfoy’s legal team is no match for me and my partner, Mr. Schyster.”

“Actually, I was wondering if you could make this general outline into a solid legal document,” said Harry, pushing a piece of parchment towards Boldface.

Boldface picked up the parchment, scanning it briefly before nodding.

“I should be able to draw you up something, Boss Potter,” said Boldface. “Of course, you’d have to get Malfoy to actually sign it for your plan to work.”

“Don’t worry, he’ll sign it,” said Harry with a smirk. “By this time tomorrow, your bank account will be inflated several times. How’s thirty five percent sound?”

“Thirty five percent of that much money!” exclaimed Boldface, who briefly thought that Harry Potter might have been overpaying him but he decided to put those petty thoughts to rest. “Mr. Potter, you have yourself a deal. Anything else?”

“Oh, and you might want to leak word to Lucius Malfoy, around noon tomorrow that Harry Potter was spotted at the Leaky Cauldron and

was there as late as twenty minutes ago,” said Harry calmly as Boldface nodded. “I’ll come here at about a half an hour before then to collect the completed document.”

“Good day then, Boss Potter, and I hope that our business concludes well,” said Boldface, reaching over and shaking hands with Harry before Harry walked out of the room, with Antonio, Shoulders, and Knuckles following Harry from the building.

“Boss Potter, normally I don’t question my superior, but it is my honest opinion you really overpaid him,” said Antonio.

“Actually, I did that deliberately, so he doesn’t double cross me,” said Harry. “A little added incentive, to get something airtight with no loopholes that Malfoy or any of his other chums who talked their way out of prison by false tales of bewitchment can exploit. Plus...”

Harry stopped and saw two bumbling looking figures walking down the streets of London. Two very familiar bumbling looking figures, who once inadvertently let Harry into a Death Eater meeting place, without checking his identity. Harry managed to secure a lot of incriminating information on that day and managed to disable a good percentage of Voldemort’s forces, even if it was too little, too late by then the first time around.

“I don’t know how Potter could have given the slip Crabbe, my old chap, but Lucius will have our heads if we don’t locate the boy,” said Goyle as Crabbe stood, staring vacantly into space for a moment before talking. “Come forth and let us keep up with our search, he’s just a mere six year old boy, he must be around this city somewhere.”

Crabbe just looked at Goyle with a blank expression, his mouth open and drooling.

“Quite right, we’ll check around, before reporting back to Diagon Alley,” said Goyle as they approached the mobsters who were still outside of the Lawfirm of Schyster and Boldface. Crabbe and Goyle stopped, staring at Harry for a few moments. “Good day young man, could you help us find Harry Potter?”

“Harry Potter?” asked Harry in a disbelief, as Antonio, Knuckles, Shoulders, and the other mobsters barely held their snickers as Harry brushed the fringe of his hair over his scar to obscure it from view.

“Yes, of course, you’re a Muggle, er you might not have heard of him,” said Goyle. “He’s a young boy, about six years old, with a lightning bolt scar on his forehead.”

“Lighting bolt scar?” asked Harry giving a fake look of deep pondering. “Oh, yes, I saw a boy with a lightning bolt scar on his forehead a few minutes ago.”

“Good, now could you please do us a favor, and be a kind lad and point out what direction he ran off to,” said Goyle, as Crabbe gave a dim witted smile.

“He went that way,” said Harry, pointing towards the general area of the entrance to the Leaky Cauldron. “Good luck in finding this Harry Potter!”

“I thank you, kind lad,” said Goyle. “As does my associate or he would if he could speak. Have a nice day, young bean.”

Crabbe and Goyle walked towards the Leaky Cauldron and when they were out of sight, the mobsters began to cackle madly at the stupidity of these two gentlemen.

At Hogwarts, Dumbledore sat in his office, looking at the latest edition of the Daily Prophet. Dumbledore could see his chances of sending Harry back to the Dursleys dwindling by the moment. While no one in the Magical World but Harry and Albus could find the house thanks to the blood wards within the house, the Headmaster could sense that the wards were getting weaker and weaker by each passing minute. Eventually they would be gone and then Ministry officials could get into the house to investigate the Dursleys and Dumbledore feared that they could be the first Muggles to ever take up residence in Azkaban.

Another thing was Potter breaking into the Weasley residence. What did he have to gain? Even more curious, he tried to steal a pet rat of all things. For the most part, Potter seemed like a scared six year old,

but the final statement about Dumbledore ruining everything really shook him to the bone. Dumbledore wanted to consult someone who was an expert on the Dark Arts before he jumped to certain conclusions.

A knock on the door of the office interrupted Dumbledore's thoughts.

"Enter," said Dumbledore calmly and the door of the Headmaster's office pushed open and Snape walked inside the office, looking like he really didn't want to be there. He sat in the chair opposite of Dumbledore. "Ah good evening, Severus. I would like to ask your opinion on a very pressing issue regarding Harry Potter."

"I believe I have made my opinion on the brat, clear, Headmaster," said Snape coldly.

"Yes, I know, but it's not your personal opinion on the boy, but rather one about something could have happened on that night that Lord Voldemort fell," said Dumbledore with a grave expression on his face. "Harry seems a bit odd for a seven year old, as if there is a strange, much older, almost darker presence within him. Most of the time I spoke with him during our altercation, he seemed scared and confused, but when I attempted to stun him for his own good, he lashed out on me."

"I fail to see where you are heading with this, Headmaster," replied Snape calmly.

"Is it possible that some of Voldemort's soul could have leaked into Harry when his killing curse backfired," said Dumbledore.

"Perhaps, but did you ever consider the possibility that something else other than a botched killing curse could have destroyed the Dark Lord's body?" asked Snape. "For instance, a Horcrux creation ritual if not done absolutely right could lead to a spectral existence much like the Dark Lord's. While he could have successfully placed a fragment of his soul into Potter, the effort could have destroyed his body but still not managed to kill him. I would strongly suggest executing Potter, because if he is running around with a piece of the Dark Lord's soul around, he could be dangerous to both himself and others."

“Now, Severus, there are ways to remove a soul fragment from the Horcrux without destroying the vessel and killing Harry might not be the answer,” said Dumbledore.

“Headmaster, killing Potter would be more humane than removing the soul fragment from him,” said Snape. “While, removing the soul fragment would allow you to destroy it, Potter would be left brain dead at the very worst. At the very best, he would have a few agonizing minutes before he dies a slow and quite painful death.”

Dumbledore looked grave at that moment. If Harry did in fact have a piece of Voldemort’s soul in him, there seemed to be little choice but to humanely put the poor child out of his misery. Nothing seemed to be going Dumbledore’s way over the past couple of days.

The next day at the Leaky Cauldron, Harry Potter walked into the place, just a few minutes before Noon. He was wearing same oversized clothes that he left the Dursleys in a few days ago. They gave him quite the pathetic look, something that Harry needed to achieve to make Lucius believe that he could be easily manipulated for his own gains.

Harry spent some time just walking around the pub, wasting time before he saw Lucius Malfoy walk into the pub about five minutes after Noon, with a pair of wizards that Harry suspected were Ministry officials along with his wife Narcissa, who as usual looked as if she had something nasty under her nose. Of course, Harry would have the same look if he had to spend that much time around Lucius.

Lucius looked around, an informant had told him that Potter was spotted here recently and he had hoped Harry was still here. He craned his neck and spotted a boy that resembled a young James Potter, and the tell tale lightning bolt scar on his head. Lucius motioned for his wife and the Ministry officials to come forward with him, as they walked towards the boy, who looked lost and vulnerable in the shadows.

“Hello Harry,” said Lucius in a completely phony kind voice.

“How did you know my name?” asked Harry in an equally phony, scared voice.

“Ah, Harry, I knew your parents,” said Lucius calmly, which was true in a sense but not the way that a young six year old would interpret an innocent statement. “Such a shame they were killed at such a young age and left you with those Muggles. They would want you to get raised in a proper magical home.”

“Muggles?” asked Harry, in quiet voice.

“Non-Magical people Harry, and yes magic does exist,” said Lucius.

“My Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia said that all magical people should be burned at the stake, because they are evil,” said Harry in an innocent voice.

“Harry, your Muggle relatives are close minded and ignorant, much like all Muggles are period,” said Lucius. “While there are a few good muggleborns here and there, like your dearly departed mother for instance, most of them are ignorant and we could do without them. So, how did these Muggles treat you, Harry?”

Harry could see Lucius quietly taking adoption papers out so Harry silently used a switching spell to replace Malfoy’s documents with his own documents once they were placed on the table. Much to Harry’s glee, no one had noticed the switch.

“They made me live in a cupboard under the stairs,” said Harry in a solemn, weak voice. “They said it was the best that a no good freak like myself could hope for.”

“I think we have heard enough to make an accurate judgment of the case,” said one of the Ministry officials in a sharp voice. “Mr. Potter, it is the belief of the Ministry of Magic that you were placed in an unfit home and as a result, Lucius and Narcissa Malfoy will sign these adoption papers and they will be your guardians in the Magical World.”

Harry nodded, as Lucius Malfoy took out a quill and signed the paper without reading what was written whatsoever. Narcissa did the same, as Lucius’s eyes flickered through the door.

“Let’s go before Dumbledore finds out about this and tries to make difficulties,” muttered Lucius to Narcissa, who nodded calmly. Lucius turned to Harry. “Harry, you need to grab onto my arm, so I can Apparate you out of here and back to my Manor.”

Harry reluctantly grabbed Lucius’s arm, making a mental note to decontaminate his hand at the first possible opportunity. With a pop, Lucius and Harry disappeared towards Malfoy Manor, with Narcissa following closely behind.

Lucius wondered if he had forgotten to do something when he took Harry Potter to his house but if it was truly important, he reasoned he would have done it already.

Harry looked at Malfoy Manor, awed in spite himself. It was rather large and impressive. The perfect location for a shopping mall but Harry was in fact getting ahead of himself.

“Welcome to the Malfoy ancestral home, it has been in our family for twelve generations, Harry,” drawled Lucius. “Five Hundred and Twelve Different Bedrooms are in this house, so you can take your pick other than the five bedrooms my son Draco has taken up residence in and of course, the bedroom Narcissa and I live in.”

Harry nodded, remembering how that many bedrooms came in handy when this was a Death Eater meeting place. Many Death Eaters spent time here, healing various wounds or hiding out from the Ministry, until the Ministry completely failed.

“Lucius, we need to introduce Harry to Draco and then we need to teach the boy etiquette as he obviously didn’t seem to learn any from those horrid Muggles,” injected Narcissa in snooty voice.

“Where is Draco anyway, my dear?” asked Lucius.

“Dobby was watching him when we went out for the day,” said Narcissa snidely. “He should be in one of his bedrooms.”

Lucius, Narcissa, and Harry walked into Malfoy Manor and up the crystal stairway towards the upper level of the house.

“Draco!” commanded Lucius in a loud voice. “You are to come out here right now and meet your new brother.”

A few seconds pause and small boy with white blond hair walked down the hallway, looking at Harry with a curious look, before spotting the lightning bolt scar.

“Father, that’s Harry Potter,” said Draco.

“Yes, Draco, we adopted him, rescuing him from Muggles and you will treat him like you would any other pureblood child in your age group,” said Lucius in a warning voice. “Is that clear, Draco?”

“Yes, Father,” said Draco.

“Good, I’ll let you two get acquainted with each other,” said Lucius, before turning to his wife. “Come, Narcissa.”

The two elder Malfoys walked away, leaving Harry to have the misfortune of being in the presence of Draco. It was jarring, as the last time Harry had seen Malfoy, he was a murderous Death Eater and now he was a nearly innocent child.

“So, you lived with Muggles, Harry?” asked Draco. “What’s that like?”

“Horrible,” said Harry curtly.

“Father says the same thing about Muggles,” said Draco. “He says that the world would be better off if all Muggles are put down like rabid dogs.”

“Really, Draco, and what is your opinion?” asked Harry, which caused Draco to stare at him like he had grown two heads.

Harry’s eyes flickered to a very familiar face with bat like ears, dressed in a pillowcase.

“What is that thing?” asked Harry in a panicked voice, pointing toward the shadows.

“Oh, that’s Dobby, he’s a house elf,” replied Draco, surveying Harry’s terrified expression. “Don’t worry, it won’t hurt you? In fact, you can order him to do anything you want and he can’t argue it. After all, if Father adopted you, you are a Malfoy now and can do anything you want to the house elf”

“Does he play fetch?” asked Harry, a wicked idea forming in his head, slowly removing his shoes.

“I suspect so, you want me to get a ball and find out,” said Draco.

“No, I believe these will do,” said Harry, as he pulled his socks off of his feet. “Hey, Dobby, think fast!”

Harry tossed the socks towards the house elf, who caught them with a surprised look.

“Harry, do you realized what you just did?” asked Draco in a completely horrified voice.

“No, I don’t realize, Draco, perhaps you could enlighten me,” replied Harry.

“Young Master has given Dobby a sock, Dobby is free!” yelled the house elf in a triumphant voice. “Oh thank you Harry Potter, sir, it is a good thing that Master Lucius adopted you, because you have just freed Dobby!”

“You freed the house elf!” screamed Draco. “Now who will cook and clean. Just wait until I tell Father!”

“Just wait until I tell Father!” retorted Harry in a whiny, sing song voice. “No one likes a tattletale, Draco!”

“What is this racket?” asked Lucius who walked up the stairs to see Dobby dancing a merry jig with Harry’s socks in his hand. “Who freed the house elf?”

“Me,” said Harry, which caused Lucius to become absolutely enraged.

"I take you into my house and this is the thanks I get! Well I guess I'm going to have to deal with you like my father dealt with me when I foolishly stepped out of line!" yelled Lucius before pointing his wand at Harry. "CRUCIO!"

Harry managed to avoid the path of the curse but he had a calculating look on his face.

"Lucius you just broke our little contract," said Harry coolly.

"What contract boy?" asked Lucius threateningly.

"You would become my guardian, providing that you did not attack me at any time," said Harry coolly. "And if you did attack me, all of the gold in the Malfoy vault at Gringotts would revert over to me and since the goblins have their ways of knowing, all of your gold has been transferred to my vault right now."

"I signed no such contract," said Lucius in a disbelieving voice.

"Take out for copy of the adoption papers that you signed and read it," suggested Harry and Lucius removed the copy of the adoption papers and sure enough, exactly what Potter had said was in the contract.

"You tricked me you meddlesome little brat, playing innocent," said Lucius coldly while raising his wand again. "Well, that gold you swindled me out of won't do you any good right now. AVADA KE..."

"Sir, shall not harm Harry Potter!" screamed Dobby and Lucius found himself blasted down dozens of stairs by Dobby the house elf.

"Some things never change," remarked Harry in an off handed voice. "Dobby Two, Lucius Zero."

"Dobby would like to thank Harry Potter, sir but Dobby does wonder if there is anything that Dobby could do for him," said Dobby in a hyperactive voice, bouncing up in down.

"In fact Dobby, you can do something for me," said Harry. "Your old Master, had a diary that belonged to someone named T.M. Riddle. I need you to bring that to me"

"Of course, sir, Dobby will be back in a minute," said Dobby and Dobby disappeared before reappearing a moment later with the diary. "Dobby hopes this is the right one, sir"

Harry looked over the diary for a moment before nodding.

"It is Dobby, thank you," said Harry, pocketing the diary. "I hope we do meet again someday but I need to get out of here."

"Dobby understands sir," said the House Elf, nodding solemnly before Harry walked down the stairs, stepping on Lucius Malfoy, who laid at the bottom of the stairs moaning with several bone fractures.

"Malfoy, you really think you could pull one over me," said Harry in a calm voice. "I've arranged for the Ministry of Magic to come here momentarily on a tip that you are hiding several dark arts items underneath your drawing room floor. I'm sure you'll have a nice jail cell in Azkaban by the end of the day."

Harry bent down and picked up Lucius's fancy looking walking stick, taking it with him as a trophy before disappearing from Malfoy Manor.

Chapter Five: Everyone Hates Vernon

Harry returned to the headquarters of his organization, with the diary tucked safely under his arm and Lucius Malfoy's cane in his hand. The Boy-Who-Lived-Twice made his way into the seemingly abandoned hotel, thinking about the best way to eliminate the diary. The venom from a Basilisk fang worked nicely last time, but breaking into Hogwarts and into the Chamber of Secrets would not be something that would be an intelligent move at this point in time, especially with Dumbledore on his guard, looking to bring Harry back to the Dursleys for his own good. While, Harry was absolutely sure he could escape again and then have the Dursleys dumped in a lake with cement shoes, it was trivial and not worth his time.

Harry walked up to his office where Sirius was waiting for him, with a slightly worried look leaving his face, when he saw Harry was back and pretty much in one piece.

"Everything went according to plan, Sirius," said Harry, breaking the silence.

"Exactly what was this plan, Harry?" asked Sirius. "I mean, you were vague earlier, you only told me that Lucius Malfoy would get everything that he deserved."

"I managed to fool Lucius, with the innocent little boy act, making him foolishly think I was a tool for his manipulation," explained Harry. "Then he signed what he thought was his cleverly created adoption papers, which I managed to switch with the ones I had my legal representation had created the other day. Lucius, being a complete dunderhead, didn't bother to read what he signed. I went home, freed Dobby the house elf for the hell of it, provoked Lucius into attacking me which broke the contract and transferred all of the gold in the Malfoy family vault to me. I also sent a letter to the Ministry, informing that they could find several curious dark arts artifacts buried underneath the Malfoy family drawing room. And without his gold, there is no way Malfoy can escape Azkaban this time and to top it all off, I have this pimpin' new cane."

Sirius looked at the cane for a few seconds.

"You took Lucius's favorite cane," said Sirius before breaking out in a loud, bark like round of laughter. "Harry, you just had to rub salt in Lucius's wounds."

"I take pride in my work," said Harry with a grin. "Of course, I'm looking forward to Draco's feeble attempts of getting revenge against me when he's older for making his father lose every knut he ever owned."

"Well, I don't know much about Draco, but Narcissa might be after your blood too," said Sirius which caused Harry to raise his eyebrow. "She'll be forced to find a job and she absolutely hates to do manual labor."

"Maybe, maybe not, but I can't expect everything to go my way all the time," said Harry before throwing the diary down onto the desk. "Thankfully I managed to lift this little gem from Lucius Malfoy's former home."

Sirius looked at the diary, feeling a strong compulsion to open it up and write in it but he managed to shake off that particular feeling.

"This is no ordinary diary," continued Harry. "This is the diary containing a sixteen year old version of Tom Marvolo Riddle or as he would be known as in the future, Lord Voldemort."

"No wonder, I felt a brief, strong compulsion to write in it," said Sirius.

"Indeed, and the pull would be much stronger, if you were an underaged witch or wizard and possess them to do nasty things," said Harry in a casual voice. "Which is what happened during my second year at Hogwarts, when Ginny Weasley foolishly trusted a diary that could think for itself despite her father's repeated warnings against artifacts of the nature. Anyway, she wrote in the diary and was possessed by Voldemort, to open up the Chamber of Secrets."

"The Chamber of Secrets was real!" exclaimed Sirius. "Mother did mention that she hoped that someone would find the Chamber and purge the world of all muggleborns, like Slytherin had intended. Only, she used a different word than muggleborns, that I'm not going to dirty my tongue by saying."

“Yes, very real, and so is the monster inside, unfortunately,” said Harry darkly. “Through Ginny, Voldemort attacked several muggleborn students throughout the year, until he finally had drained enough of her life, to come out of the pages of the diary. I decided to run down to the Chamber of Secrets and was forced to fight the monster, a basilisk.”

“You fought a basilisk when you were twelve years old!” growled Sirius in an indignant voice. “Where in the hell was Dumbledore during all of this?”

“Lucius Malfoy had blackmailed the board of Governors into sacking Dumbledore, but Dumbledore seemed to show up promptly after I had risked my neck,” said Harry. “In fact, Dumbledore never seemed to show his face, until after I had risked bodily harm. I don’t know if this was some twisted way of testing my skills that Dumbledore had convinced himself that was for the best or what.”

Harry took a deep breath, as the floor beneath him was starting to shake slightly.

“To make a long story short, Riddle and I had a conversation, Dumbledore’s phoenix Fawkes brought the sorting hat, Riddle ordered the basilisk to attack me, Fawkes poked the eyes of the Basilisk out, I pulled the Sword of Gryffindor out of the Sorting Hat, stabbed the basilisk, destroyed the diary with the venom from a basilisk fang before Riddle could completely leave the diary, Riddle was gone, Ginny was safe, the end,” said Harry calmly. “Harry Potter against Lord Voldemort Part Three summed up in a nutshell.”

“What would have happened if Riddle had managed to escape the diary?” asked Sirius.

“Voldemort would have returned to full power a lot sooner than he did,” answered Harry curtly. “This diary is another possible method that Voldemort might want to use to return to power and I need to find a way to destroy it.”

“Basilisk venom seemed to work well enough before,” suggested Sirius.

“Yes, it did, but Basilisks aren’t exactly the most common magical creatures,” said Harry. “The only one alive is underneath Hogwarts in the Chamber of Secrets and I don’t know if basilisk venom is something that you can buy.”

“Yes, but I can’t think of anything that might be as corrosive as Basilisk venom,” said Sirius thoughtfully. “I suppose there might be other substances, whether they be magical or Muggle in origin, that could destroy it.”

“Right, I’ll have to test a few things, trial and error, but for right now, I’m keeping the diary locked up where no one will get it,” said Harry, levitating the diary into the air, before placing it in an old empty trunk that was in his office. Harry waved his wand, snapping the trunk shut before putting several spells on it to prevent anyone from opening the trunk. “There, if anyone but me, tries to open up that trunk, they’ll get blasted backwards and then bound with unbreakable ropes. I will deal with them appropriately when I find them.”

Harry heard a knock on the door of his office and Harry leaned his head forward.

“Enter,” prompted Harry in a dull voice and the door opened to reveal two of Harry’s mobsters. “Ah, come in, I’ve been expecting you.”

“We have the information you wanted Boss Potter,” said one of the mobsters, tossing a stack of folders onto Harry’s desk.

“Excellent, every business my organization has controlling interest in,” said Harry, thumbing through the contents in the folder, looking them over in great detail but one particular business caused Harry to break out in a large round of evil laughter.

“Okay Harry, what exactly did you read that made you so happy?” asked Sirius, looking a bit disturbed.

“This is excellent, the perfect opportunity for revenge on the Dursleys,” replied Harry looking over one of the documents in the folder. “My criminal organization, is funding Grunnings, the drill company that my Uncle Vernon is employed. Oh glorious revenge,

this is the second greatest thing that has happened to me in the last few hours.”

“Wait, your crime syndicate funds Dursley’s place of employment,” said Sirius before it dawned on him what Harry had in mind. “Well, it won’t be his place of employment for much longer, if the look on your face is any indication.”

“Sirius, did you really think I would fire my dear Uncle Vernon for no good reason?” asked Harry in a falsely sweet voice. “Well, granted, I do have a good reason but I’m willing to give Vernon the benefit of the doubt or rather, the benefit of giving him enough rope to hang himself with.”

“Meaning?” prompted Sirius, even though he had a shrewd idea what his godson was planning.

“Vernon Dursley will be getting a job assessment review from one of the top financial backers for Grunnings tomorrow morning,” said Harry, rubbing his hands together with glee before walking towards the office, with Lucius Malfoy’s cane in hand before swinging the door and walking down the hallway whistling merrily under his breath.

Lucius Malfoy was dragged into Azkaban by two Aurors. He would make Potter rue the day that he made a mockery out of him and took his money. Worse yet, Malfoy didn’t even have his stylish pimp cane as the infernal little brat took that too.

“Listen you two, I was under the Imperius Curse,” said Lucius desperately which caused the two Aurors to burst out into laughter.

“Listen, Lucy, that defense only works when you bribe someone,” said one of the Aurors calmly.

“You’re damn lucky you’re not getting the kiss, for throwing an Unforgivable at the Boy-Who-Lived,” added a second Auror.

“The foolish child provoked me!” yelled Lucius in a desperate voice. “If he didn’t free my house elf he...”

Lucius found himself struck with a silencing charm and could not say anymore.

“That’s enough out of you, Malfoy,” said one of the Aurors, as they pushed Malfoy into Azkaban, both wands pointed at the back of Malfoy’s head.

Lucius walked into the prison, his shoulder hunched forward. Attacking the Boy-Who-Lived was enough to get him into Azkaban but all of the dark arts artifacts buried underneath his manor proved to be too much. Without his fortune, Lucius was screwed.

“Without your fortune Malfoy, you’re screwed,” remarked the Auror.

“Enjoy your stay at Azkaban,” said the second Auror in a sadistic voice, throwing the knutless Lucius Malfoy towards his new cell, the door of which had not been opened as of yet. Malfoy hit the bars with a crash.

“Maybe you should have opened the door first if you wanted to put him in,” said the Auror.

“No, I shouldn’t of,” said the second Auror as he levitated Malfoy before flinging him into the steel bars of his cell again. “Okay, maybe you’ve got a point, but maybe just one more time to make sure.”

The Auror blasted a banishing charm towards Lucius and once again Lucius’s head bounced off of the metal bars of the cell door.

“Well, I’ll be damned,” muttered the Auror before waving his wand and clicking the cell open. Lucius scurried into the cell quickly and pulled the door shut behind him. “You know, I wish more prisoners would do that, it would make our jobs so much easier.”

Lucius crawled onto the cot, as he heard the door sealed shut and the Aurors walked. He pulled his battered body onto a cot inside the cell, before curling up in a fetal ball. He went cold, with visions of Harry Potter outsmarting him, as the Dementors glided by the cell. The Dementors seemed to linger, as Lucius felt tormented by memories of being tricked by a six year old little brat. He would break out of Azkaban one day and avenge his humiliation.

Adrianna Zabini sat in the library of one of the manor houses that she inherited in one of her many marriages, pouring over a very obscure dark arts book. She cursed her current husband and would kill him on the spot, if she didn't have another man with an insanely large fortune to trap in her web, seduce, and promptly kill. Edward had done something unforgivable to her and nine months later, she gave birth to a girl. The pregnancy part didn't bother Adrianna, but the fact that she gave birth to a girl who could usurp her when she got older caused her to be paranoid. Blaise looked to inherit her mother's beauty and that was something that Adrianna could not take, was competition, especially from her own flesh and blood. It wasn't like she was getting any younger, despite her best efforts. Certain potions and spells caused her to retain a youthful experience, temporarily, but it was becoming more difficult to hide behind a glamour as time spun on. With each husband she married and knocked off, her assets expanded but she was really just killing time until she could get her hands on the biggest inheritance of them all. The illusive Potter family fortune, belonging to the Boy-Who-Lived, Harry Potter. A boy who was the same age as her daughter, Blaise and Adrianna was counting down the days until Potter became of age so she could seduce him, marry him, kill him, and take his fortune. Then and only end could she retire from her chosen career.

This brought Adrianna back to the problem of her daughter and the ever growing fear that Blaise would steal her rightful position when she was older. That could not happen, so Adrianna found herself pouring over text over text, attempting to find a way to turn her daughter into her son, in mind, body, and soul. Adrianna had done some underhanded things in her life, but killing a child, even if she did turn out to be possible competition, was something she could not do. A full gender switch was her only possible avenue. So far her extensive searches had turned up nothing permanent but she was confident that someday she would find what she needed to eliminate her daughter as a threat. Then there would be no competition and Adrianna's plans for one Harry Potter would go unchallenged.

The Floo connection in the library came to life and Adrianna Zabini looked up, looking irritated before seeing the face of one of the wizard members of her husband's mob.

"This had better be good," said Adrianna in an irritated voice.

"Madam Zabini, there is something that you should know," said the mobster in the fireplace.

"Spit it out," said Adrianna, she had no time for men with little or no money.

"The rival criminal organization has a new boss, so your husband may be a little late in returning home," said the mobster.

"Whatever, he wants to do, he can't avoid me forever," said Adrianna, tossing back her long dark hair with a superior look on her face, knowing full well that statement would get back to her husband and would add to his paranoia that she could kill him at any moment, something that she thrived on for the moment, as it kept Edward out of her hair. "Is there anything else?"

"No," said the mobster quickly.

"Good, now out of my sight, I have important business to attend to," said Adrianna in a voice that left no room for argument.

Vernon Dursley sat in his office at Grunnings, looking absolutely pleased with himself. Less than a week ago he had been knocked unconscious by his freakish nephew and that was a blow, but the plus side was he didn't have to see the boy ever again. Petunia informed him that the boy had fled and while two other freaks had come to question her about the boy's whereabouts, he hadn't heard any more about the brat. Everything was too good to be true, as a new financial backer was coming to Grunnings this morning and Vernon wore his best suit, hoping to impress this new backer. Perhaps if he had wormed his way into this financial backer's confidence, he would get a promotion. A promotion that he was passed up from, because of his alleged temper. The notion of Vernon Dursley having a temper was quite insane. Sure he backhanded the boy a few times, but he was a freak and thus he didn't count. Vernon admitted at yelling at a few secretaries but they had it coming for not putting enough sugar in his tea.

“Mr. Dursley, sir, the new financial backer wishes to speak with you personally,” said Vernon’s secretary, who looked a bit apprehensive. “He’s in Meeting Room Three right now.”

Vernon sprang to his feet, this was too good to be true. The financial backer must have heard of all of his years of distinguished service at Grunnings and was going to give him everything that he deserved. Vernon knocked on the door of Meeting Room Three.

“Come in,” said a calm voice, that struck Vernon is being rather familiar but he couldn’t quite place it but Vernon took it as his cue to open the door.

“You wanted to see me Mister...” said Vernon, taking in the two large bodyguards who were standing by the seat of the new financial backer, which was spun around.

“You may call, me Boss Potter!” said the voice as the chair spun around, revealing the boy!

“YOU!” yelled Vernon, going purple in the face. “What in the hell are you doing here, freak?”

“Vernon, my criminal syndicate funds Grunnings,” said Harry calmly, looking bored. “So, in other words, I can make or break you.”

“Listen here boy, I am your legal guardian and I demand that you give me a promotion!” yelled Vernon but he saw the boy’s two bodyguards come on either side of him, cracking their knuckles. “How did you become a mafia leader anyway, boy?”

“First of all, you will address me by my proper title, Boss Potter,” said Harry his eyes narrowing dangerously before adding. “Vermin.”

“Boy, I should have beat the respect out of you a long time ago,” said Vernon, his face becoming purple once more. “You wouldn’t disrespect me if you weren’t hiding behind your two bodyguards right now. You are a spineless little weak little brat, freak.”

“Oh, you think I wouldn’t have the nerve to disrespect you, Vermin,” said Harry before reaching into his sleeve and pulling out his wand. “Well, say hello to my little friend.”

Vernon sputtered, recognizing the object at once. He had the misfortune of meeting the boy’s parents briefly and they had both used a wand similar to what the boy was holding.

“I knocked you out once and I didn’t even have a wand then,” said Harry with a smirk as his two bodyguards chuckled dully. “I could make you make a complete and utter idiot out of yourself, not that you don’t do that well yourself, eh, Vern.”

“You can’t do that, people will notice,” said Vernon in a desperate voice.

“Not with what I’m willing to pay them to look the other way,” replied Harry. “Money might not be able to buy happiness but it can sure as hell buy vengeance. Ya know what I mean, Vern.”

Vernon just sank himself into a chair, the boy was going to fire him and use his freaky powers to humiliate him, not necessarily in that order.

“Time enough for that later, time for your performance review,” said Harry in an all too cheerful voice, as he turned his back, with his bodyguards surrounding on either side of Vernon. “Let’s see, Dursley, Dursley, Dursley, ah, Dursley, Vernon Q.”

Harry thumbed through the folder, as Vernon looked on with an apprehensive look on his face.

“Dear me, several allegations of the harassment of female employees, Vernon I’m surprised, what would Aunt Petunia say?” asked Harry as he looked through Vernon’s folder. “We’ll have to inform her of course, a good marriage should be based on honesty.”

Vernon began to sweat purposely as the boy began to further pick apart his record.

"Oh boy, you had to attend psychological counseling because you were said to have a temper," continued Harry.

"Boy, I don't have a temper!" thundered Vernon, shaking his fist at Harry.

"Right Vernon, you don't have a temper," said Harry sarcastically. "Really Vernon, what kind of idiot do you take me for?"

Vernon just gritted his teeth, wishing he would have drowned the boy when the brat was dumped on his doorstep all those years ago. It would have saved him the humiliating situation he was currently forced to endure.

"There is just one thing I want to know boy," said Vernon in a quiet voice through gritted teeth. "A week ago you were nothing but a spineless coward who had no idea that...magic..existed and cowered in fear at me. Now you are the boss of a criminal organization, not to mention you are mouthing off to me with no fear. What in the hell happened to you, boy?"

"Wouldn't you like to know Vernon and thank you for bringing up the fact that I cowered in fear at you," said Harry. "We here at Grunnings don't like people who break the law."

"I never broke the law, boy!" yelled Vernon.

"Oh, I think that forcing me to live in a cramped cupboard underneath the stairs with little or no food falls under the area of child abuse," said Harry. "Something that is very much against the law, Vermin."

"So, you're putting me through this because I gave you exactly what you deserved," said Vernon.

"Yes, Vernon, but I wanted to teach you a lesson, in respect for your betters," said Harry. "And unfortunately, the only way I can teach you that lesson is by firing you from Grunnings. You have thirty minutes to clean out your desk. If I find that you are on the property for a second longer, you will be arrested."

“Respecting my betters!” thundered Vernon but one of Harry’s bodyguards grabbed Vernon by the arm and pulled him away from Harry. “You’re dead, boy! I’ll kill you! You can’t fire me! You’ll be sorry!”

“If I had a knut for every time someone threatened to kill me, I’d double my fortune at the very least,” said Harry with a smirk before turning to his second bodyguard. “I believe we’re done here, we should get back to headquarters.”

“Right Boss Potter,” said the bodyguard as his associate returned.

“That damn Dursley attempted to stab me with a pair of scissors,” grumbled the bodyguard. “I had to break the idiot’s arm. You’d better watch out for him boss. He might not seem too dangerous but you’d be surprised what some of these kooks will do for revenge.”

“I know,” said Harry. “If he tries to kill me, well, I might just have to return the favor.”

Harry beckoned his two bodyguards to follow him. Other individuals in his organization were waiting in the limousine just outside the entrance, keeping an eye out for suspicious characters.

As Harry and his bodyguards walked from the limo, several of the Grunnings employees cheered as he walked from the office.

“Thank God someone managed to finally fire Dursley!” yelled one of the employees in a happy voice.

“Hey, everyone, party tonight at my house, to celebrate the sacking of Dursley,” said another employee and everyone looked jubilant at sacking of Vernon Dursley.

Harry smiled, it was nice that he managed to do something that benefited other people than him. Still, Harry had much work to do. The Boy-Who-Lived-Twice needed to send a letter to complete the next phase of his plans.

Remus Lupin sat in the flat he was renting with a tired look on his face, looking at a picture of himself, James, Peter, and Sirius from

their fifth year at Hogwarts. Right beside it was a framed picture of Lily, James, and Harry, who was only a few months old in that picture. Those were the only reminders that Remus kept around to remind him of what seemed like a distant past. Everything went to hell in a matter of days. Peter, Lily, and James were all dead, with Sirius having turned traitor and Harry was shipped off to some unknown location by Albus Dumbledore. Remus asked Dumbledore where Harry lived on two occasions but Dumbledore remained rather tight lipped and said that it was for the best that Remus didn't know. Dumbledore reassured Remus that Harry was perfectly safe so Remus had no choice but to grudgingly accept the Headmaster's words and thus drop the subject. He had no other information contradicting Dumbledore's word, so Remus had to assume Harry was okay.

Unfortunately, everything was far from okay with Harry. Almost a week ago, Harry had fled from wherever Dumbledore had kept him. Dumbledore still withheld details about where that was from Remus and everyone else for that matter. Harry was the last link to Lily and James and Remus feared foul play, especially with the Death Eater breakout around the same time. Death Eaters that sadly included his former friend, Black.

The werewolf saw an owl tapping the outside of the window. Remus quickly got to his feet and opened the window. The owl dropped a letter on the table, before soaring off before Remus could get a better look at the owl. Remus took the letter, reading it closely.

Remus,

It is time for you to know the truth about recent events. Meet us at the Leaky Cauldron at Four in the Afternoon. Tell no one and come alone. Anyone who comes with you will be shot on sight and yes, this includes Albus Dumbledore. Don't disappoint us.

Sincerely,

A Friend

Remus looked at the letter, expecting more but it turned out that the short note was all that he got. He couldn't help but being curious and

something told him to take the order in the letter about coming alone all too seriously.

Chapter Six: Moony and the Mob.

Remus Lupin walked towards the Leaky Cauldron cautiously, looking over his shoulder periodically to ensure that he wasn't being followed. This mysterious letter had Remus both intrigued and worried at the same time. The fact that whoever sent the letter was quite insistent about Remus coming alone was rather curious. Still, Remus told no one of the letter, not wanting to put them in danger.

Still, Remus walked inside the Leaky Cauldron, tilting his head from left to right for any suspicious looking characters. Sure enough, towards the back of the bar, he saw two men in suits, beckoning for him to come over. The werewolf walked towards the two men in suits cautiously.

"Did you send a letter to me earlier?" whispered Remus.

"The Boss did Mr. Lupin," said one of the suited men. "The Boss would like to have a few words with you."

Remus took a step backwards, he wondered briefly if he had done anything to earn the ire of Muggle mobsters.

"Relax, Mr. Lupin, we're just going to take you for a little ride," declared the second mobster, as he pulled out what Lupin could have sworn was a Horse's head. Remus pulled out his wand but one of the mobsters forcefully grabbed Remus by the arm, taking his wand out of his hand, before forcing his hand on the Horse's head. Remus felt a pull and disappeared along with the two mobsters to some undisclosed location.

Mundungus Fletcher looked up from his drink, at the signs of a commotion. He managed to focus long enough to see Remus Lupin being dragged off by two shady looking mobsters. Even in his current state, Dung managed to sober himself up long enough to realize that this might be something that Dumbledore should know about. At the very least, Dung could make up for blowing off his assignment to scope out Knockturn Alley to have a few drinks at the Leaky Cauldron.

Dung rose to his feet, staggering around, barely managing to find the door. He would have to get to Hogwarts the Muggle way, as the last

time he tried to Apparate when intoxicated, the results were quite painful.

Remus looked around, as he landed feet first inside a windowless office. The mobster twirled Remus's wand between his fingers.

"Where am I?" asked Remus in a dangerous voice. "I better get some answers now or..."

"Good afternoon Remus," said a raspy voice obscured in the shadows. "Do take a seat, we have much to discuss."

Remus sat down opposite of what he assumed to be the mob boss.

"In your letter, you told me you would inform me of the truth of certain recent events," remarked Remus, wishing that he had his wand. "Exactly, what do you know?"

"I know a great deal about you, Remus Lupin or should I say, Moony," replied the raspy voice which caused Remus to raise his eyebrows. "I know you were bitten by a werewolf known as Fenrir Greyback, I know you managed to attend Hogwarts despite your condition, where you made three friends, James Potter, Sirius Black, and Peter Pettigrew. They were known as Prongs, Padfoot, and Wormtail, and together the four of you were perhaps among the greatest pranksters to ever attend Hogwarts, the Marauders. I know the Marauders had a petty feud with Severus Snape or Snivellus as he was dubbed. You four also created the Marauder's Map, which was confiscated by Argus Filch during your final year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. After Hogwarts, James married Lily Evans, and they had a son named Harry. Unfortunately, the Potters were betrayed by someone who they thought to be a friend and Voldemort killed Lily and James. Somehow, Harry managed to defeat Voldemort."

Remus stared at the shadowed figure, wondering how he could have known so much information.

"That much we both know but the story gets murkier from here," declared the mob boss calmly. "Dumbledore arranged for Harry to be sent to an undisclosed location, something that I'm assuming that you don't know about."

“No, Dumbledore was rather vague about where he sent Harry,” replied Remus. “All he told me was Harry would be sent to a home that he would be loved and I had to take him for his word, even though in the back of my mind, there wasn’t something right about the whole thing. Call it a werewolf sixth sense if you will, but I felt Dumbledore was hiding something.”

“Dumbledore might have convinced himself that he had Harry Potter’s best interests in mind, but reality does paint quite the different picture,” said the mob boss. “This is one of the cases where your instincts were quite correct Remus. Especially, considering the fact that Harry was sent to live with Lily’s Muggle relatives!”

“Harry was sent where!” thundered Remus angrily, rising to his feet causing both of the mobsters that brought Remus in to step back in terror. “Lily and James clearly told Dumbledore that he was in no way to be sent to the Dursleys. Both of them despise magic and are the type of people who would have us burnt at the stake if they were given the chance!”

Remus paced up and down the office, muttering a few choice words about Dumbledore under his breath.

“That no good, that lying, that son of...” muttered Remus before trailing off. “I worshipped the ground he walked on and he turns around and spits on that same ground.”

“That’s only part of the truth, Remus,” interjected the mob boss.

“So, there’s more,” replied Remus calmly, before sitting down. “Please continue.”

“Gladly,” remarked the mob boss calmly. “Now, Lily and James were betrayed by Voldemort, because they put their trust in the wrong person. That much is true. However, Sirius Black was never the Secret Keeper.”

“What?” asked Remus in a disbelieving voice. “Black had to be the Secret Keeper, the Ministry did throw him into Azkaban after all.”

“Yes, but the problem was, that Sirius never did receive a trial for his actions and the real villain remains at large,” remarked the mob boss. “In other words, Lily and James switched Secret Keepers from Sirius to Peter Pettigrew.”

“That does make sense,” said Remus thoughtfully. “No one would expect Wormtail to be the Secret Keeper, everyone would jump to Sirius. But, why did they never tell me?”

“I don’t quite know, I can only speculate,” said the mob boss. “Maybe, they wanted to eliminated any leaks, but it was all for moot as the betrayal did happen.”

The mob boss paused for dramatic effect.

“Just one question,” remarked Remus. “Exactly how do I know you’re telling me the truth?”

“A very good question and begins and ends with the whereabouts of one Harry Potter,” answered the mob boss.

“You know where Harry is!” exclaimed Remus.

“How could I not?” asked the mob boss, stepping outside the shadows, causing Remus to look at him with a disbelieving look. The lightning bolt scar on his forehead was prominent and if Remus didn’t see it with his own eyes, he wouldn’t believe it.

“Harry?” asked Remus in an uncertain voice.

“That’s my name, last time I checked,” replied Harry dryly. “Now let me tell you a story that began twenty years ago in an alternate timeline.”

Albus Dumbledore sat in his office, hearing the distant yell of students in the corridors of Hogwarts. He normally enjoyed overhearing the banter of young witches and wizards, but his mind was on the ever present problem of the missing Boy-Who-Lived.

“Enter,” remarked Dumbledore, as a loud knocking was heard outside of his office door and a moment later, the door swung up, as

Mundungus Fletcher staggered inside, nearly knocking over a vase in Dumbledore's possession, earning him a disapproving snort and a disgusted glare from the portrait of Phineas Nigellus Black. "Mundungus, you look rather disturbed, sit down."

"More like rather drunk," muttered Phineas but if Dumbledore heard him, he chose not to acknowledge.

Mundungus barely hit the chair, sitting down to face the Headmaster.

"Professor...kidnapping...Lupin...mobsters...Portkey...Leaky Cauldron," hiccupped Mundungus as he could barely sit up straight to face Dumbledore.

"Remus Lupin was kidnapped by mobsters and forced to take a Portkey at the Leaky Cauldron," repeated Dumbledore slowly and clearly, all the twinkle having disappeared from his eyes. "Exactly what would mobsters want with Remus and why weren't you keeping an eye on Knockturn Alley for any signs of the escaped Death Eaters, Mundungus."

"Aye, I just took a break and had a couple of drinks, Headmaster," slurred Mundungus.

"Try a couple dozen and you might have a bit more credible story, you filthy half blood," muttered Phineas.

"Enough, Phineas," declared Dumbledore calmly before turning his attention towards Mundungus. "Well, Mundungus I'm rather disappointed at the fact you abandoned your post but rather intrigued with the information you brought me. I hope you take your duties more seriously in the future."

"Of course, Professor Dumbledore," slurred Mundungus as he attempted to rise to his feet managing it shakily and staggering out of the office, with Phineas and a few of the other portraits of past Headmasters and Headmistresses staring at Mundungus with disapproving looks etched on their face as the grimy man left.

"Mobsters, honestly why would they have anything to do with wizards?" asked one of the portraits.

“Now, there are quiet a few wizard mob bosses, in fact there is one right now, if I’m not mistaken,” answered Dumbledore. “Edward Zabini, he leads one of the top crime syndicates in the United Kingdom, but he has never been wanted by the Ministry because it’s never been proven he’s broken any magical laws.”

“Zabini, Zabini, Zabini,” muttered Phineas, as if the portrait was trying to something unpleasant. Oh, yes, I remember that name. Wasn’t Edward Zabini the one that married that gold digging slut, Adrianna Edwards. The one that killed her first five husbands.”

“Now, Phineas, I’m quite sure it’s just a coincidence that those five men dropped dead,” reprimanded Dumbledore. “Such things are strange, but there isn’t any proof that Adrianna should be tossed into Azkaban for murder. There is no proof and besides, she has a six year old daughter, so I would think she would have a change of heart even if there was something more sinister to this whole business. ”

“Right, you do know that she was acquaintances with Riddle at Hogwarts or has that slipped your mind in old age, Dumbledore,” replied Phineas snidely. “Her latest husband might not be a supporter for the Dark Lord, but she definitely is. Zabini could be a pitiful puppet, dangling on a string at her every whim until she is bored with him. Your insistence on believing the best in everyone is your biggest flaw, Dumbledore. ”

Dumbledore just turned his back, choosing not to acknowledge that last statement, getting back to the matter at hand. Lupin getting kidnapped by mobsters and Harry Potter disappearing had some kind of connection, although Dumbledore thought he was missing one crucial piece of information that would solve the entire puzzle. The Death Eaters, including the traitorous Sirius Black, escaping from Azkaban added to the troubles that were going on in the Wizarding World.

Dumbledore hoped that he could find Harry and return him to his relatives soon. His window of opportunity of getting the child back before the protection around Number Four Privet Drive competently dissolved was rapidly disappearing. The Headmaster didn’t have too much time left to find Harry but so far, the remaining members of the

Order of the Phoenix were having little or no luck. The Ministry of Magic wouldn't have been a help, as they would sooner send the Dursleys to Azkaban after recent information then send Harry to Number Four Privet Drive.

"Very interesting, Harry," said Remus. "Your story is so outrageous that I could scarcely believe it at first, but now that I think about it, it does explain everything that happens in the past week."

Remus paused, looking at the ceiling for a few seconds.

"Still, time travel has never been done for more than a few hours," replied Remus. "I believe eight hours is the maximum that a time turner can go but technically, I suppose it isn't really time travel you did. You traveled backwards from an alternate universe that everything happened the same until the moment you woke up in your six year old body."

Harry nodded in agreement.

"Wormtail was the one that betrayed Lily and James," replied Remus as if still trying to wrap his finger around everything. "We need to get Sirius out of Azkaban somehow and put Wormtail in there."

"Well, I'm already half way done, I would have put Wormtail in had Dumbledore not shown up at the wrong moment," declared Harry and it took a few seconds for Remus to realize what Harry had just done.

"You broke into Azkaban and broke Sirius out!" yelled Remus in a disbelieving voice.

"Guilty as charged," replied Harry with a mischievous voice.

"Harry that is..." started Remus trying to find the right words to describe what Harry had done.

"Completely insane," supplied Harry cheerfully.

"Well, yes, but exactly how did you break into Azkaban?" asked Remus.

“Blueprints of the wards that I got from Gringotts,” answered Harry. “The goblin seemed to be rather prompt to part with the blueprints, when I threw some gold in his way. Along with blueprints of Hogwarts and the Ministry of Magic, I might add.”

“Ah yes, but I’m sure you won’t do anything underhanded with that particular information,” said Remus calmly.

“If Dumbledore and the Ministry behaves and plays by my rules, then there shouldn’t be any reason why I should use the blueprints of Hogwarts and the Ministry,” said Harry. “Of course, Dumbledore tends to march to his own tune and the Ministry in general does things that only benefit them and any agenda they might swing with at the time.”

Remus nodded, looking a bit overwhelmed at what he had learned in a few hours.

“I suppose I should save the story about how I tricked Lucius Malfoy into giving me all of the Malfoy family fortune for another day,” said Harry in a casual voice. “You do look a bit overwhelmed at what I told you today.”

Remus nodded calmly.

“Come on, Sirius is waiting for us upstairs, I don’t doubt he’ll be pleased to see you for the first time in years,” continued Harry and with that, Remus and Harry left the office of the Boy-Who-Lived-Twice to head upstairs to where Sirius was staying.

Harry reached forward to knock on the door.

“Come in,” said Sirius and the door opened, allowing Remus and Harry to walk into the room. “Hello Remus.”

“Sirius,” said Remus. “It’s been too long, hasn’t it?”

“Yes, Harry told you the whole story I assume,” said Sirius.

“Everything, right in down to the headache inducing time travel details,” replied Remus causing Sirius and Harry to both laugh. “I’m sorry I ever believed you doubted Lily and James, Sirius.”

“Ah, that’s all right, you were too blinded by grief to think rationally, Moony,” said Sirius “And in turn, I might have thought you were the spy and I think you can see why I might have thought it wasn’t a good idea to tell you that Lily and James didn’t switch Secret Keepers.”

“Well, to be fair, Sirius, Voldemort was recruiting dark creatures and during that time, no one knew who they could trust,” said Remus fairly.

“Let’s just say we’re both wrong and move on with our lives, putting this entire nasty business behind us Moony” said Sirius.

“Good idea, Padfoot,” responded Remus.

“Now that’s all settled, I have some important business that I need to intend to,” injected Harry. “I’m sure you two want to catch up.”

Harry walked from the room, deep in thought, plotting his next move. Stealing the Philosopher’s Stone and smashing it with a sledgehammer seemed to be a great idea, but the problem was the stone was at Gringotts. If only Harry could find out when Flamel might remove it, he could have a chance to get his hands on the Stone, before Voldemort had a chance to put it to some nefarious use.

“Boss Potter,” said Antonio and Harry looked up to acknowledge his lead advisor.

“Yes, Antonio what is it?” asked Harry calmly.

“I know you’ve been busy lately but I’d be honored if you attend dinner at the house my sister and her family, tomorrow night” said Antonio. “I mentioned you to her a few days ago and she is insistent in meeting you. Plus, I can introduce you to my niece then.”

“The one you thought I would get along with well,” said Harry, feeling slightly apprehensive about having to spend time around someone his age, as Harry didn’t want to dumb down his maturity level to communicate at the level of children.

“Yes, that one,” remarked Antonio. “And as your advisor, I think it would be a good idea for you to spend some time around children around your own age group, no matter how mature you are for your age.”

“Your advice has never steered me wrong in the week that we have met, Antonio,” said Harry wearily. “I accept your invitation.”

In the forests of Albania, the human form Peter Pettigrew approached an area of the forest that was dark and a faint black mist swirled through the air. He heard a loud, sinister hissing sound causing him to jump into the air. Peter stood frozen, unable or unwilling to transform into his Animagus form and a trio of snakes slithered in a circle around his feet, hissing madly, causing Peter to tremble in fear.

“The master will be pleased to have found fresh meat,” hissed the first snake, as Peter whimpered instinctively, even though he couldn’t understand what the snake said.

“This one has meat plentiful enough that we will be enough to feed on for months,” hissed a second snake venomously.

“So, plump, so tender,” hissed the third snake, wrapping around Peter’s legs, causing Peter to scream like a little girl.

A fourth snake, a large snake nearly forty feet long slithered towards the forest, as the dark mist became thicker. Peter whimpered, as the snake looked up with him, with glowing red eyes. The eyes seemed rather familiar to Peter but in his terror, he couldn’t logically place the source of where the eyes were.

“Wormtail,” declared the snake in English, but still in a bit of a hiss. “You’ve decided to finally seek out your master.”

Wormtail stared in spite of himself, scarcely believing what he had heard.

“M-m-m-my Lord,” declared Wormtail in a terrified voice, too aware that the snakes continued to circle around his feet.

“Yes, Wormtail, I am Lord Voldemort,” declared the snake in a bored voice. “My form has been turned into a demonic spirit that can only be possess animals for a matter of days. I have many slimy followers willing to give their freedom and lives up for the honor being possessed by what they believe to be the Lord of Snakes.”

Some seconds later, several dozen more snakes joined Voldemort and his trio of followers, baring their fangs and causing Wormtail to throw his arms over his face in fear.

“Do not worry Wormtail, they will not kill you, unless of your you do something foolish,” declared the voice of Lord Voldemort, breaking into a cold, high laughter. “I heard tales that you were dead but apparently they were gravely exaggerating.”

Voldemort broke out into laughter at his own pun and Wormtail followed with a round of nervous chuckles.

“You might be pitiful in magic but you could be the able body wizard I require to return myself to my full power and my full body,” hissed Voldemort.

“Anything, my Lord, I live to serve you,” said Wormtail tentatively.

“And as long as you serve me well, you shall live, Wormtail,” declared Voldemort. “Now, you need to follow my plan to the letter and soon, Lord Voldemort will reign supreme over all of the filth polluting the magical world.”

Wormtail leaned in to listen to the Dark Lord’s plan, attempting to block the hisses of the snakes eerily circling around him and his Master from his mind.

Antonio, Remus, and Harry walked up towards Antonio’s sister’s house. Sirius wanted to come with them, causing Harry and Remus to remind him that he was still wanted by the Ministry of Magic. Not to mention the fact that the Muggle police were after him as well, because he was such a dangerous magical fugitive. Harry hoped that he could get his hands on Wormtail soon, but the sinking feeling that the rodent had ran off to Albania to meet up with Voldemort was too prominent. Unfortunately, Harry didn’t know exactly where in the

forests of Albania Voldemort's spirit was hiding out. Otherwise, he would attempt to find some way to contain Voldemort, so his followers could not go after him.

Antonio rang the doorbell. A moment later, the door opened and Antonio and Remus walked in, with Harry following behind. Harry mentally cursed his six year old height, as he could barely see who had let him in.

"Ah, yes, Marie, this is the Boss Potter I've been telling you so much about and this is a friend of his father's, Remus Lupin," said Antonio. "Harry, Remus, this is my sister Marie, and her husband Jonathan, along with their daughter Hermione."

Harry's head jerked up, hardly believing what he heard. Any thoughts that this was a coincidence were blasted from his head. There was no mistaking that bushy hair even if he had last seen her nearly fifteen years from now.

Harry was face to face with a six year old, nearly seven year old, Hermione Granger.

Chapter Seven: Trapped

Harry looked at Hermione for a few seconds his eyes widened before shaking his head and fixing his face into a neutral expression and turning towards the faces of Hermione's parents, not willing to look his old friend in her face. Remus seemed to look at Harry with a curious expression out of the corner of his eye.

"Pleased to meet you all," said Harry in a calm voice, as if there was nothing bothering him at all.

Marie Granger nudged her daughter in the side.

"Hermione, why don't you take Harry upstairs and show him your room," suggested Marie.

"Mum, I'm sure Harry doesn't want to..." started Hermione but Harry cut her off.

"Lead the way, Hermione," said Harry, surprising himself with his own daring and Hermione turned her back, leading Harry upstairs towards her room.

Harry's mind flashed back to the night that set him on the path eventually sent him back through time.

In a rundown house in one of the worst parts of London, With Hermione and Harry shut the door behind them, sealing it shut, before they began to put wards up. Harry collapsed on a moth worn chair, coughing up blood from getting his lung punctured. Hermione managed to walk over, healing Harry's injury to the best of her abilities.

"How in the hell did they find us, Hermione?" asked Harry weakly. "I thought we lost them months ago."

"I don't know, Harry, I really don't know," said Hermione in a fretful voice before adding tearfully. "I just wish we would have been able to save Luna in time."

“She fought to the end through Hermione,” said Harry in a firm voice. “She took several Death Eaters down with her. Draco managed to catch her off guard from behind in the end.”

“I knew we shouldn’t have trusted that little bastard,” said Hermione savagely.

“Now, Hermione, he did slip us some important information about the Death Eaters that helped us to thin the ranks,” said Harry calmly. “It was all to gain our trust; Voldemort must have told Draco to do that. He doesn’t care about how many Death Eaters die, as long as he kills me in the end.”

“After all this time, we made the same mistake as Dumbledore did,” muttered Hermione sadly. “We put our trust in the wrong person.”

“I know,” said Harry sadly. “We were desperate and now it’s just you and me, Hermione.”

“Yes, against all of them,” answered Hermione darkly.

“Just like old times,” muttered Harry, shaking his head, as he felt the wards around him begin to crack. “Hermione, you need to get out of here, save yourself.”

“No,” answered Hermione curtly.

“Hermione, I don’t want anyone else to die, you’re all I have left,” replied Harry desperately. “Leave, please.”

“You can’t fight all of them, Harry James Potter,” replied Hermione in a tense voice. “I’ve stood by your side all this time. I’m not about to leave now.”

Before Harry could argue this point, he heard a loud banging from outside of the house. Unfortunately, it was too late for Hermione to run.

“Aim to kill, this vermin doesn’t deserve our pity,” whispered Harry and Hermione nodded in agreement with a determined look on her face, her wand at the ready.

The door cracked open, as Hermione and Harry pointed their wands to the front door.

“AVADA KEDAVRA!” yelled Harry and Hermione in unison, sending jets of green light flying out of the door. The loud thumping sound from outside indicated that at least one of the Death Eaters had been struck down.

The windows shattered, sending pieces of broken glass flying towards Harry and Hermione, who shielded their eyes. A group of eight Death Eaters walked towards the room, lead by the crazed form of Bellatrix Lestrage.

“Potter!” cackled Bellatrix loudly. “The Dark Lord will be very pleased that we finally caught up with you. Now be a good boy and come quietly and the Dark Lord may honor you with a nice, quick, painless, death.”

Harry ducked behind the couch, pulling Hermione by the hand behind them. A volley of spells caused the Death Eaters to scatter in every direction. A loud black light enveloped one of the Death Eaters, causing him to scream out in agony and burst into flames, his ashes dropping to the ground.

The couch was lifted out of the air and splattered to the ground, leaving Harry and Hermione exposed. Hermione managed to catch one of the Death Eater’s in the throat with a deadly jinx, causing his throat to close up and him to fall to the ground, choking to death. She sprang up, dodging the spells of the crazed Bellatrix Lestrage, as Harry dueled three Death Eaters at once, barely avoiding getting killed with Avada Kedavra. Harry sprang up and shot ropes out of his wand, wrapping it around the throat of one of his foes, before yanking forward. The neck of the Death Eater snapped back and fell to the ground. Harry dodged behind.

“CRUCIO!” yelled Bellatrix, pointing her wand towards Hermione and Hermione screamed in agony, as Bellatrix tortured Hermione.

Harry turned to Bellatrix in horror, before whipping his wand towards her, sending a jet of red fire right at Bellatrix. Bellatrix waved her wand, causing a wall of water to appear in front of her, blocking Harry’s attack with expert precision.

“Come on, Harry, you can do it,” mocked Bellatrix sarcastically, as she dodged another deadly curse by the wand of Harry. “Oh too slow, too bad, shoddy reflexes, a common drawback of being a filthy half blood.”

Harry spun around, to block a curse that was sent to his back by one of the Death Eaters, before using his wand to hoist the Death Eater up into the air and down to the ground with a clatter.

“Let’s wrap this up, the Dark Lord is growing tired of Potter eluding him!” shrieked Bellatrix, as a pair of Death Eaters backed Harry off and Bellatrix raised her wand, pointing it towards Hermione and slashed her wand towards Hermione’s throat.

“Hermione, no!” yelled Harry as Hermione’s throat was sliced and she crumpled to the ground, blood dripping from her and Harry blasted the Death Eaters out of the way, blowing large holes in their chest. Harry’s wrist whipped forward, sending a large metallic spike towards Bellatrix.

Bellatrix managed to block the majority of the impact, but much of the blast had sent her spiraling backwards. Harry kneeled to Hermione’s side, squeezing her hand.

“This is my fault. I’m sorry you were dragged into this,” declared Harry, as Hermione weakly looked up at him as her world slowly faded from around her.

“My choice Harry,” whispered Hermione, managing to force those words from her slit throat before her eyes shut, never know any more.

Harry sat numbly by Hermione's side, her lifeless hand still in his. It was over, Voldemort had as good as won.

"CRUCIO!" yelled Bellatrix Lestrange in a loud voice and the spell hit Harry in the back. Harry turned to Bellatrix, biting his lip, with a pained expression on his face. **"Ah, Harry, the Mudblood's dead, and now the Dark Lord will finish you off. You fail Harry Potter, your worthless Mummy and Daddy must be rolling over in their graves at what a failure you are. Sirius might have been too, if they found his body to put in his grave."**

Harry snapped out of it and sent Bellatrix flying across the room. Bellatrix bent over, about to press the Dark Mark on her arm to contact Voldemort but Harry sliced her arm cleanly off before she could do the deed.

"You killed Hermione, Lestrange. You killed Sirius, you killed many others, now I'm going to kill you if it's the last thing I ever do," said Harry in a final tone of voice as he aimed his wand towards Bellatrix, who had blood dripping from where her right arm was. **"CRUCIO!"**

Bellatrix screamed in agony from the curse as Harry looked at her, with a dull, lifeless, unemotional look in his green eyes.

"I mean it this time, Bellatrix! I want to cause pain, your suffering. You got your wish, bitch!" screamed Harry savagely, as he tortured Bellatrix, causing Bellatrix to attempt to claw her own eyes out and pull at her mouth, drawing blood from her face. Bellatrix fell backwards, blood dripping from her body.

Harry slashed his wand, slicing Bellatrix's body to ribbons, with a crazed look on his face.

"Is this what you wanted Tom?" asked Harry, as he began ripping Bellatrix apart piece by piece. She was long since dead, but Harry spent about a minute more, tearing Bellatrix to shreds, mutilating her beyond all recognition.

Harry stepped back, looking down at Hermione's lifeless body before turning his back and looking towards no one in particular.

“I may be next Tom Marvolo Riddle but I make this vow on this day,” replied Harry in an emotionless tone of voice. “You may kill me, but I’m dragging you straight to hell with me on my way down.”

Harry prepared to leave, ignoring the dead bodies of the Death Eaters before walking away, his shoulders sagging in a defeated position. Hermione had stood by him through everything. Her only crime was being a loyal friend and now she was slaughtered simply because of how close she was to Harry.

After that night, Harry began to concoct the plan to turn his magic into what was basically a high powered nuclear weapon and take both himself and Voldemort out in one fell swoop. Unfortunately, Harry’s plans had taken a wrong turn and he had traveled back in time.

Everything just happened so fast and Harry found himself face to face with Hermione, sooner than he would have ever had thought previously.

In fact, now that Harry thought about it, he was never in Hermione’s house the first time around, so he had never seen the inside of her room. Harry felt a small burst of nearly morbid curiosity but he still couldn’t quite look Hermione in the face at the moment.

Hermione spun around, with reaching forward to pull the door open, looking at the floor with slight embarrassment, before she pushed the door open.

“Well, this is my room,” said Hermione in a small voice, as she stepped back reluctantly to lead Harry inside.

Somehow, this was how Harry imagined his best friend’s room to be, even at such a young age. Rows and rows of books, neatly organized on the shelves. Not a page out of place. There were a handful of toys in view that were placed neatly on a bottom shelf, nearly forgotten or untouched.

“Nice,” said Harry in a sincere tone of voice as he had a better look, before turning to Hermione, who had both of her eyes on him, in a slightly apprehensive look. “It really seems to suit you Hermione.”

“Thank you,” said Hermione in a small voice before looking at Harry. “How come you didn’t seem to want to look me in the eye until now?”

Harry was caught off guard. Even as a young child, Hermione was rather observant and Harry resolved to be more careful. He didn’t want to let Hermione to know any more than she needed know right off the bat. He had just met her in this timeline and didn’t know exactly how she would react to him in time.

“You just remind me of a friend I knew, years ago,” replied Harry in a cool tone of voice and Hermione looked at Harry for a few seconds, before nodding slowly. She seemed to have bought that explanation, at least for the moment. Technically Harry wasn’t lying either, in his mind, five years had passed since he last saw Hermione in the original timeline.

“So, you’re Uncle Antonio’s boss in...Customer Relations,” started Hermione, putting an extra emphasis on the last two words, as if she was a bit skeptical about how much her Uncle Antonio’s job. “Exactly how old are you, anyway?”

“Six years old,” answered Harry causing Hermione to be taken by surprise.

“You sound so much older, don’t look like it through,” muttered Hermione, shaking her head and Harry quickly decided to steer the conversation in a different direction.

“So I see you like to read, Hermione,” said Harry quickly.

“Yes, but the other children at school think I’m strange,” whispered Hermione, as if she was afraid someone would overhear her. “They whisper about me, saying that I’m some kind of freak but it’s really nothing...really.”

“Hermione, you really shouldn’t let those people get to you,” said Harry in a reassuring voice. “I’m sure your friends wouldn’t care about your quirks.”

Hermione muttered something, that Harry couldn’t quite hear.

“Could you repeat that, Hermione?” asked Harry softly.

“I don’t have any friends,” muttered Hermione in an embarrassed tone of voice. “Please, don’t tell Mum and Dad, because they keep asking me if something’s wrong and I’m not quite telling the truth.”

Harry was beginning to see why Hermione had problems making friends until both Ron and Harry had pretty much forced the issue by saving her from the troll the first time around. She had shut herself too far into her books and thus was out of touch with other people her age.

“Hermione, its okay,” said Harry in a reassuring voice.

“You don’t know, you wouldn’t know what its like to be called nothing but an insufferable know it all and a freak who likes nothing but books!” yelled Hermione angrily, tears welling up in her eyes. It just all came out, she didn’t know why, but she seemed to trust Harry for some reason.

“Hey, Hermione, I really don’t have any friends my age either,” said Harry calmly and Hermione looked up, with a curious expression on her face.

“Why don’t you, though?” asked Hermione. “You seem to be easy enough to get along with. People wouldn’t look at you funny because you’d rather learn then join in with their silly games..

“Yes, but most people didn’t spend five years of there life locked up in a cupboard!” replied Harry calmly and Hermione’s eyes snapped up, looking Harry in the eyes. “Not to mention their cousin and his little cronies scared away everyone who tried to be nice to me on the schoolyard. My Aunt and Uncle, who I had the misfortune of living with tried to squash any hopes I would have had by jamming me in a cupboard, calling me nothing but a good for nothing freak. They rarely laid a hand on me mind you, except for maybe when my Uncle had a bit too much to drink and his temper really got the better of him, but the taunts about ending up like my parents because what I am was more painful then any punch my oafish Uncle could have thrown. It’s not my bloody fault I was dropped on their doorstep. My parents never wanted it either. The only reason I ended up in that bloody

house in the first place is because of some manipulative lemon drop sucking jerk who wants to play God and control everyone's lives. The same person who my parents trusted but they are dead and I never knew them!"

Harry stopped, he had been holding in that rant for quite some time and he felt bad that he just had to go off on Hermione.

"Harry, that's horrible," muttered Hermione sadly. "I'm sorry, at least I have Mum and Dad, and you don't even have that."

"No, Hermione, I understand your concerns and I promise not to make fun of you for being..." started Harry but he couldn't bring himself to finish.

"An insufferable Know It All," supplied Hermione helpfully before voicing something that she had been wondering about Harry . "Exactly why don't your aunt, uncle, and cousin like you anyway?"

"Hermione, I'll tell you when the time is right, but I try not to dwell that much on what happened on that place," said Harry shortly and Hermione decided it was best not to press Harry on the issue.

"Harry, Hermione, dinner's ready," called the voice of Marie Granger and Harry and Hermione moved from Hermione's room, before moving down stairs.

Harry had never known about Hermione's life before Hogwarts, but now Harry could understand exactly why Hermione seemed to take it so bad when she had gotten into an argument with either Ron or Harry. They had been her first friends after all.

Harry had never bothered to concern himself too much with Hermione's problems and had never concerned himself with learning more about his friend. In fact, his dependency on Hermione to solve all of his problems sometimes crippled his effectiveness and when she was killed in the original timeline, everything fell apart for Harry, causing him to concoct the plan that caused him to be transported into his six year old body and set the motion for the recent events in his life.

Dinner at the Grangers was a pretty uneventful affair. After the intentional awkwardness in this timeline, Hermione and Harry had hit it off pretty well. To an outside observer, it might have seemed like they were friends since they were born. Harry knew the exact truth however and when she was ready, Harry would tell Hermione everything much like he did with Sirius and Remus. He just needed to make sure that she would keep the information from untrustworthy parties.

Several hours later, Remus, Antonio, Harry, and their hidden bodyguards climbed into car, after dinner.

"You know Harry, I don't know what you did to my niece to make her take to you so well, but it worked and I thank you," said Antonio gratefully. "Hermione doesn't seem to get along with the other children at school well but really who wants to be friends with people who at that ignorant."

"You knew something was up then," replied Harry calmly. "And you hoped Hermione and I would become friends then."

"Well, yes, boss, I had a bit of an ulterior motive for asking you to come here but it worked out well didn't it," said Antonio in a bit of a nervous voice. He had seen Herb Evans get really angry when he caught someone leading him on and Lily had an equally dangerous temper when provoked from what Antonio heard. "Hermione's the type of kid who will say everything's alright but it's not like she's the best liar in the world. Gets it from Marie, that's why she's a dentist and didn't get in the family business like I did. Horrid liar, couldn't stretch the truth at the very least."

"You know Antonio, it's a damn good thing that I like your niece," replied Harry in a soft voice, with his twenty six year old sense bubbling to the surface, having been manipulated enough by Dumbledore to know that he didn't like it one bit.

"Yes, that's good, I've heard sleeping with the fishes isn't all that glamorous," replied Antonio dryly, causing Harry to break out into laughter.

“Anyway, Hermione doesn’t have any friends at school, so I fear that could cause her to be overly dependent on books when she gets older,” said Harry in a certain voice, as he remembered how long it took Hermione to stop relying so much on books and start thinking on her feet in the other timeline. Of course, Harry had ample opportunity to change that. “Do whatever you need to do get the proper paperwork in place, so I can attend school with Hermione and keep her grounded in the real world.”

“That’s actually a good idea Harry,” added Remus calmly before turning Antonio. “Do you think you can pull a few strings and get Harry in a bit late?”

“I’ll see what I can do, Mr. Lupin,” said Antonio calmly.

“And if you can’t, a little magic won’t go amiss,” muttered Harry calmly as the car came to a sudden stop. “Now, what?”

“Boss, we could have a bit of a problem,” replied one of the bodyguards, who looked out the window, to see that all four of the tires had been Transfigured into concrete

“Harry, we need to get out of here!” suggested Remus in a frantic voice but it was unfortunately too late Harry’s eyes diverted up to see the unsmiling face of Albus Dumbledore standing on the side of the street, with a half a dozen members of the Order of the Phoenix, wands out as they surrounded the immobile vehicle.

“Hello, Harry,” said Dumbledore in a grandfatherly voice that made Harry want to retch. “I suggest you come with me back to me to your Aunt and Uncle’s, while we take these mobsters in for questioning for the kidnapping of you and Remus Lupin.”

Chapter Eight: Descent of the Dursleys.

The two bodyguards exchanged looks before pointing their guns towards Dumbledore and his fellow members of the Order of Phoenix.

"Now, I'm afraid there is no need for violence, if you would just come along quietly and surrender Harry and Remus to me," declared Dumbledore, a twinkle in his eye but Harry noticed that he had his hand on his wand.

"Well, you see, the boss wouldn't like that much," declared Antonio. "I assume you're Dumbledore."

"You would assume correctly," said Dumbledore calmly.

"Then, we have orders to shoot you on sight if you meddle in the plans of our boss," declared Antonio as the bodyguard pointed their guns right next to the crooked nose of Albus Dumbledore, who to his credit didn't back down. "Besides, I don't think Harry wants to come with you."

"I am only concerned for the boy's safety," remarked Dumbledore, turning slightly to address Antonio. "He just got into a mild argument with his relatives and ran away, where he unfortunately ran into you. You could do the decent thing and let the boy go and I might help you get a reduced prison sentence."

"Wait, my name's Harry?" asked Harry in a tone of mock confusion. "I always thought it was boy or freak or you'll never amount to anything and get yourself killed like your parents. At least that's what Uncle Vernon always called me. Right before he abused me"

"The brat was obviously denied a toy or perhaps some sweets, so he is throwing a little tantrum by running away," said Snape snidely, pointing his wand at Harry. "Someone who was spawned by the arrogance of James Potter would classify such as abuse. These Muggle mobsters shouldn't be much of a problem to modify and we can drag the boy back to his relations."

"That will be sufficient Severus," said Dumbledore, as the other members of the Order of the Phoenix stood in the background.

“Dumbledore, I’m a sporting man so I’ll give you and your little associates two minutes to leave us, or I’ll give the word to open fire,” declared Antonio, who now had a gun pointed right at Snape.

Harry, meanwhile was taking advantage of the diversion by undoing the work done on the tires behind his back. It was putting a strain on his small body.

“Come Harry, you need to return to your relations, because as long as you call that place home, you’ll be safe,” declared Dumbledore kindly, hoping that the boy would hear reason.

“I don’t call that Number Four Privet Drive home and never will,” said Harry moodily and a look of horror began to appear on Dumbledore’s face, as he turned to members of the Order of the Phoenix.

“The protection will have dropped, we need to get the Dursleys to a safe location before the Ministry can find them,” remarked Dumbledore quickly before adding due to the inquisitive looks by the other members of the Order of the Phoenix. “By disowning the house of his aunt and uncle, Harry has knocked out the wards created to keep him safe.”

“The foolish brat did that on perhaps!” snapped Snape, angrily. “Just as arrogant as his father was...”

“Snape, he is just a child,” replied a female member of the Order in a fretful voice but Snape seemed beyond reason, muttering curses under his breath, directed towards James Potter.

“Hit the gas,” hissed Harry, as the Order of the Phoenix argued amongst themselves, with most of them wanting to hex Snape, with Dumbledore trying to vainly maintain confusion.

The bodyguard that was driving hit the gas, speeding away from Dumbledore, who sent a pair of light curses towards the car, trying to stop it rather than wreck it but both of his attacks bounced off.

Harry slumped back on the seat, breathing heavily with sweat dripping down his face.

“Harry, are you okay?” asked Remus.

“I’ll be fine after I lay down for a few hours,” said Harry weakly. “I put a powerful shield charm over the car, should repel most of what Dumbledore could do, including tracking charms.”

“Putting a shield charm over an object is very advanced magic, Auror level in the Ministry,” replied Remus lightly.

“Yes, I realize that,” replied Harry weakly. “It’s also extremely draining on a six year old who shouldn’t even really be doing much beyond a few small bits of emotionally charged accidental magic.”

Harry paused, before answering the unasked question.

“I’ll be fine,” declared Harry calmly. “I just need bed rest, fluids, and I’ll be on my feet, faster than you can say Snivellus is a greasy git.”

Vernon Dursley had seen better days for sure. His meddlesome nephew had caused him to lose his job and it seemed the details of his terminate was spread to all of the businesses in the area that he might have been qualified. Vernon grunted as he had a half finished bottle of beer in his hand, his eyes glazed over, having not bathed for days. His wife Petunia and son Dudley had wisely kept their distance from him, as Vernon had snapped at them since the boy left.

Vernon looked up as the front door blasted open and a group of Ministry of Magic Aurors appeared the entrance, lead by the current head of Magical Law Enforcement, Bartemius Crouch.

“Ministry of Magic!” barked Crouch, as a pair of Aurors pointed their wands at Vernon.

“Vernon, what is going on?” asked Petunia but more Aurors moved to secure Petunia, who began to realize what is happening.

“Freaks, the whole lot of you, get the hell out of my home!” yelled Petunia but she found a pair of wands pointed just inches away from her throat.

“Vernon and Petunia Dursley, you are wanted in the disappearance of Harry James Potter!” thundered Crouch in a loud voice. “You are also charged for reckless endangerment and abuse of a magical child. If convicted, you will be sentenced to the Dementor’s Kiss for your crimes against the Magical World.”

“D-d-d-ementor’s Kiss!” shrieked Petunia in a horrified voice, knowing fully well exactly what Dementors were but Crouch ignored her stammering.

“Show us the child’s room,” ordered Crouch and Petunia’s knees began to shake in horror of what was to come.

“Listen here, you can’t just walk into my house and flaunt your abnormalities!” yelled Vernon, his face turning purple. “I have half the mind to call the...”

“Silence, Muggle,” declared one of the Aurors causing a jet of sparks to bounce off of Vernon’s face in warning.

This would have caused Vernon to stop, but unfortunately for the oafish man, alcohol played a role in his next decision. Vernon reached his beefy hands to the throat of the Auror, managing to throttle him for a brief second. A stunning spell ended any feeble attempt for an attack by Vernon Dursley, as Vernon dropped to the ground, shaking the house.

“Lead us to young Mr. Potter’s room, now!” declared Crouch in a forceful voice and Petunia slowly turned on the spot, hastening to obey, walking forward a short distance, before shakily pointing towards the Cupboard under the stairs.

“He lived right there,” said Petunia, afraid of what was going to happen to her, Vernon, and Dudley once these Ministry of Magic people inspected the cupboard.

Crouch tapped the cupboard door with his wand and it swung open. Several of the Aurors moved in to look closely. The cupboard looked as if it was the only part of the house that had never been cleaned. It was filthy with several tattered pieces of clothing strewn about and a small dried up puddle of what appeared to be blood. Crouch jabbed

his wand at the dried up puddle and it glowed a bright green, indicating that it was in fact the blood of a magical person that was spilled in this cupboard at one point.

“Were you aware Mrs. Dursley that the abuse of a magical child by Muggles carries a severe penalty?” asked Crouch.

“It wasn’t my fault!” yelled Petunia angrily. “Dumbledore threatened me, saying that I had to take my sister’s son or...or...”

Petunia’s throat became suddenly dry and found herself unable to communicate what Dumbledore asked.

“Lily would have never wanted him to come here anyway, she knew my distaste for her lot, but he forced him on us, threatening us!” yelled Petunia quickly, once her voice returned.

“That still gives you no call for abusing a magical child,” declared Crouch coldly. “Your husband will be given the Dementor’s Kiss and you will be asked to testify against Albus Dumbledore, as he has violated the last will and testament of the Potters by placing their young son in your care. In the meantime, a high security cell in Azkaban will be your new home.”

“What about my son?” asked Petunia in a small voice. “What about Dudley?”

“Do you or your husband have any relations that he can be sent to?” asked Crouch curtly.

“My husband’s sister, Marge,” said Petunia in a small voice.

“Modify the boy’s memory, making him believe his parents died in an automobile accident and find this Marge Dursley, so she can take the proper custody of the Dursley boy!” barked Crouch to a pair of Aurors, who quickly moved off to search the house for Dudley Dursley. “We’ll take this filth the Ministry.”

The Aurors dragged the unconscious body of Vernon out the door and Petunia reluctantly joined the Aurors, looking fearfully up the stairs over her shoulder.

“Hurry up!” barked Crouch, wanting to get these Muggles safely to Azkaban before Dumbledore saw it fit to interfere.

Recent events could have not gone better for one Bartemius Crouch. Up until this Harry Potter scandal, he was on the verge of being removed as the Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, due to the fallout of the debacle a couple of years ago involving his son being caught with the Lestranges. Now, he could bring in the magic intolerant Muggles who had abused the Boy-Who-Lived, thus endearing himself to the people of the Magical World. Crouch realized he had to play this game carefully, as this was his last chance to make a play to become Minister of Magic, leapfrogging over Cornelius Fudge, who appeared to be the favorite to get the job next. It didn't matter who he stepped on towards his goal. Crouch could care less about what happened to Harry Potter in the long run. All he cared about was about achieving his lofty ambitions and ruling the Wizarding World with an iron fist as the next Minister of Magic.

In the Riverfront Hotel, Harry looked bit weary and tired, after the escape from Dumbledore and members of the Order of the Phoenix the previous evening. He leaned on a chair, sipping on the tea that he had been brought up to him. It would be a couple of days yet before Harry's body fully recovered by the extremely advanced magic that he was forced to do in order to narrowly escape from Dumbledore. Harry felt right now as if he had a mild case of the flu.

Harry's head jerked up slightly at the sound of a knock on his door.

“Come in,” replied Harry and the door opened to reveal Sirius and Remus entering the room. Sirius shut the door behind him. “Ah, Sirius, Remus, how are you two today?”

“Fine, Harry, but you still look like hell after yesterday,” replied Sirius.

“Feel like it too actually, but I don't think Dumbledore expected us to slip away from him like that,” replied Harry.

“He still thinks you and I are victims of a kidnapping by the members of your mob,” declared Remus.

"It's better he thinks that, otherwise he might start thinking a bit too hard about the circumstances of my departure from the Dursleys," said Harry. "The same Dursleys that I might add that Dumbledore still wants me to return to."

"Actually, that's the reason why we came up here, Harry," said Sirius.

"I'm afraid I'm not following you," answered Harry a bit of a confused voice.

"What Sirius means is that it is highly unlikely Dumbledore will be able to send you back to the Dursleys when the Ministry is through with them," remarked Remus lightly, handing a Daily Prophet to Harry. "Have a look for yourself."

Harry took the copy of the latest Daily Prophet, looking at the headline on the front page of the paper

Abusive Relatives of Harry Potter Brought to Justice

By Rita Skeeter

The mysterious disappearance of Harry Potter has been foremost on the mind of everyone in the Magical Community. No new information was released on the case since the day that Lucius Malfoy had requested to adopt Harry Potter but shocking information had come to light that Lord Malfoy had been a follower of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named before the procedure could be finalized. Ever since the arrest of Malfoy, no new information has come to light on one of the most baffling incidents to hit the Wizarding World since the height of terror of the reign of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. That is until the official Ministry of Magic report detailing the arrests of Vernon and Petunia Dursley were released in the early hours of the morning.

In an odd occurrence, the Ministry had trouble locating the Dursleys, until a large burst of magical energy around their residence signaled a ward of some sort collapsing. This reporter could not even begin to guess the reasons why wards protecting the Dursleys from being found by the Ministry were erected around the premises and as I write, Ministry of Magic Officials are holding their own investigations on the appearance and disappearances of said wards.

Aurors were quick to respond to the spike of magic, in the general area where the Ministry had records of location of the Boy-Who-Lived. Lead by the head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, Bartemius Crouch, they quickly surrounded the two adult Dursleys. A drunken Vernon Dursley attempted to maim one of the Aurors through Muggle methods but was promptly subdued. At the request of Crouch, Petunia Dursley led the Aurors and Crouch to where Harry Potter slept, a foul smelling, rat-infested cupboard that looked as if it had not been cleaned in years. As Crouch prepared to order for the Dementor's Kiss on both Dursleys, Petunia broke in with a sob story, claiming that "he" had forced her to take in Harry Potter, under threats that Mrs. Dursley was unable to speak of, due to magic preventing her from doing so.

The "he" in question was of course Albus Dumbledore. Yes, the same Albus Dumbledore who I reported had sent the young defeater of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named to his magical phobic Muggle relatives against the wishes of Lily and James Potter. (see page eight for other questionable decisions in recent years by Albus Dumbledore) Petunia said that she knew her sister would never have allowed Harry to be sent to live with her and Vernon. "Lily knew how we felt about her lot." Yet, Harry Potter was sent to the Dursleys and lived in horrid conditions until he ran away recently.

What kind of man is Albus Dumbledore to allow Harry to live with filthy, alcoholic, magical hating Muggles? Many in the Wizengamont may be asking that question soon, Dumbledore will be asked to come before the Wizengamont to defend his actions. Several Ministry officials are calling for Dumbledore's wand. The hearing is rumored to take place in the new year, as the Ministry wishes to collect further evidence before putting Dumbledore on trial for his handling of Harry Potter.

As for the Dursleys, Vernon Dursley was promptly given the Dementor's Kiss for his role in the living arrangements of Harry Potter. Petunia Dursley will be asked to give information against Dumbledore when he goes before the Wizengamont before receiving a similar punishment. Her current whereabouts are listed as classified. Also, the son of Petunia and Vernon was sent to live with relations, with his

memory modified to believe his parents had died in a car (a form of Muggle transportation) accident.

The Ministry of Magic is still searching desperately for Harry Potter and this reporter will bring to you more information as it comes out.

Harry broke out laughing weakly at the article.

“Rita’s not all too bad when she’s destroying the reputation of someone I’m not too fond of,” replied Harry, looking at the article with a smirk. “Truth was contorted slightly, but it’s not like she butchered anyone important. Just the Dursleys and Dumbledore.”

“And what if she decides to try to destroy the reputation of someone you’re fond of?” asked Sirius. “Or you, for that matter.”

“I’ll have to put her down with a can of Raid, naturally,” replied Harry in a cryptic voice, causing Sirius and Remus to exchange baffled looks. “Plus, the unintentional irony of Dudley being lied to about his parents dying in a car accident, when that was the same lie that the Dursleys used on me against my parents.”

Harry took a deep breath, looking oddly thoughtful for a six year old.

“The Ministry might keep Dumbledore in check by taking away his Dursleys card,” said Harry, taking a sip of his tea to stall for time. “But, I haven’t seen the last of Dumbledore.”

“You mean he might try something else,” said Remus.

“Dumbledore doesn’t know when he’s not wanted,” said Harry. “I’ve gotten on fine for years without him the first time around when he was killed. I’ve gotten along fine without him so far this time around. I don’t need or want his input.”

Harry took a bit a breath, reflecting on what he perceived to be a couple of the more important pieces of information that he read in the article.

“Still, the Dursleys getting the Dementor’s Kiss might cause a few other alterations with the timelines, and Crouch seems to have

wormed his way into a chance for a nice little power play by bringing the evil Muggle relatives of the Boy-Who-Lived to justice, to raise his stature within the Ministry,” said Harry.

“If Crouch gains too much power, he could a problem,” said Sirius in a worried voice. “You know he has sent quite a few people to Azkaban for disagreeing him for him under the guise of being a Death Eater, without a trial.”

“Yes, Crouch could be a problem but I have an ace up my sleeve regarding him and what an ace it is, to keep him in line” said Harry casually causing Remus and Sirius to wonder what the young Potter boy had up his sleeve. “Enough about Barty, I need to go figure out a way to steal the Philosopher’s Stone, so I can just muddle the waters of the timeline even more.”

Peter Pettigrew busied himself digging a hole in the graveyard in Little Hangleton as the floating mist that was Lord Voldemort looked on. The Dark Lord had demanded that Wormtail dig up the graveyard of Tom Riddle Senior using the Muggle methods, just because he felt particularly evil on this day.

“Must, I do this the Muggle way, my Lord,” grunted Peter, as he shakily threw another shovel full of dirt into the air.

“Wormtail, you are to cease your complaining or there will be severe consequences,” hissed Voldemort angrily. “Quickly, before we are seen by Muggles. My father’s bones are essential for the ritual to be a success.”

Wormtail looked into the grave which had been completely dug up but there wasn’t a trace of any bones.

“My Lord, I’m afraid we might have a bit of a problem,” whimpered Wormtail. “Your fathers bones...well...they are...”

“Out with it, vermin,” declared Voldemort with an angry hissed that caused Wormtail to cower in fear.

“The bones aren’t here,” replied Wormtail meekly, in obvious fear of the Dark Lord’s reaction to this setback.

“What!” exclaimed Voldemort, the black mist glowing a deep shade of red, nearly blinding Wormtail. “That’s impossible.”

“I’m only telling you what I see Master,” declared Wormtail meekly before adding desperately. “Couldn’t you use the bones of another relative to complete the ritual?”

“No I cannot Wormtail!” snapped Voldemort angrily. “The ritual says clearly that it must be the bones of my father. No other relations will do”

Wormtail leaned against the gravestone, cowering against the spooky mist that was the Dark Lord.

“This is an unfortunate setback,” hissed Voldemort with regret. “However, there is more than one dark arts ritual to return myself to full power but I need capable minions to collect the items necessary to return to full power.”

“I’m here, my Lord, I’ll do anything that my Master asks of me, I humbly place myself at your service,” said Wormtail.

“I’ll make myself clear and indicate that I require competent minions to carry out this task, hissed Voldemort before thinking briefly. “Yes, yes, you can be of some use to me through Wormtail. Do you wish to serve Lord Voldemort no matter what?”

“Y-y-es,” stammered Wormtail

“Good, I require your body,” hissed Voldemort and Peter looked confused.

“M-my body,” stammered Wormtail

“Yes, I trust there is not a problem with that, Wormtail,” replied Voldemort calmly.

“No of course not, my Lord,” replied Wormtail. “I’ll let you into my heart, my body, and my soul, if it means it will assist your success.”

“Excellent Wormtail, just keep thinking that and before you know it, you’ll feel like a new man,” hissed Voldemort and the mist swirled around Wormtail, wrapping around his body before a loud squelching sound echoed throughout the graveyard.

The body of Peter Pettigrew dropped to the ground for a matter of minutes, registering the shock of such powerful magical inhabiting a not so powerful body. When the eyes flickered open, they were red slits and a very sinister smile contorted on the face of Wormtail, one that looked out of character for anyone who knew the rodent.

“The possession was a success,” hissed Voldemort, through Wormtail, as the Dark Lord used his body to get to his feet. The Dark Lord wasn’t too pleased with the shoddy structure he had to use to house his power but until he could complete the proper rituals, this solution would have to do until the items could be collected. A process that unfortunately would take months or even years to complete, but Voldemort had no other operations because someone had apparently either stolen or destroyed his father’s bones. They would pay the ultimate price when the Dark Lord found out about them “A few alterations to my personal appearance and I’ll be able to use this temporary solution to summon my forces and return to a body that would be better equipped for someone of my stature.”

Voldemort waved his wand, adding a few well placed charms to project a fearful aura around him, before pulling up his hood to obscure his face. Reaching towards Wormtail’s forearm, the Dark Lord pressed the Dark Mark, summoning his Inner Circle or whatever was left of him to his current location.

A few seconds later, a couple dozen pops echoed through the graveyard, as a combination group of Death Eaters that wormed their way out of Azkaban and those who had just recently broken out of Azkaban appeared in the graveyard, looking highly confused. That confusion turned to a mixture of fear and pleasant surprise depending on the Death Eater, they saw the hooded form of what they can only be their master.

“Welcome, my followers,” hissed Voldemort, as all the Death Eaters seemed unable to speak due to residual amounts of shock. “Lord

Voldemort has called you all back to his service, as he requires your insistence for a crucial ritual that will spell the end to all that oppose us.”

Chapter Nine: Alterations, Altercations, and Assorted Randomness.

Harry sat in his office, with a vial of swirling blue potion in his hand. He had pretty much recovered by overcharging his magic beyond the limits of his six year old body and was ready to start with the next phase of his plans. It was imperative that Harry steal the Philosopher's Stone before Voldemort managed to get the same idea. With Pettigrew no doubt back at his side, it would be only a matter of time before Voldemort discovered that Harry had obliterated the bones of the dark wizard's Muggle father. The next easiest way to return Voldemort to his body would be a dose of the Elixir of Life and Harry had a feeling that Voldemort might come to the same conclusion all too soon.

Antonio pushed Harry's office door open, interrupting Harry's thoughts about Voldemort.

"Harry, it wasn't easy, but I managed to get you into school a bit late," said Antonio. "Remus was a big help, but I still had to pull a few strings for some contacts I've had. Still you'll be starting on Monday."

"Excellent," remarked Harry swiftly, as it allowed him to tie up a few more loose ends.

"It'll be good for Hermione, having someone to relate to at school with her," added Antonio, more to himself than to Harry. "Plus it's just as well that she's been talking about you nonstop since she met you, which quite frankly is something that has never happened with someone around her age group."

Harry had a shadow of a smile on his face, but he was too busy making sure the potion was the exact texture it was supposed to be. The Boy-Who-Lived-Twice had mixed it himself, which wasn't the best idea, but Harry found himself to be competent enough when Snape wasn't hovering over his shoulder like the proverbial bat from hell.

"Good, considering that every other child I have met that was my age was scared off by my oafish cousin, having a friend is a welcomed

change,” muttered Harry, as he examined the potion. “That’s about as perfect as I can make this thing.”

At the moment, Sirius and Remus entered Harry’s office.

“Harry, you’ve been up here working almost all day,” said Sirius.

“I’ve been working on a very delicate potion, one that I need to continue the next step of my plans to keep Voldemort from returning to a body to easily resume his reign of terror,” replied Harry calmly. “This potion is very rare, bordering on dark by some standards, but it will do the trick.”

“Exactly who do you tend to us that potion on Harry?” asked Remus calmly.

“Me,” replied Harry.

“Harry, last time you ingested a potion that was borderline dark...” started Sirius but Harry waved his hand.

“That potion was quite a bit more complex then this one and trust me, I made sure this potion was correct,” replied Harry dismissively. “The flaws should be eliminated, Merlin knows I’ve created this potion about four or five times before I was completely satisfied.”

“Well, if you say so Harry, but maybe you should test it first,” replied Sirius in a skeptical voice.

“Good idea,” said Harry calmly, before putting the vial towards his mouth and swallowing the potion.

“I meant on someone other then yourself,” declared Sirius in a bewildered voice but Harry sat there, unblinking.

“Nothing’s happening,” observed Remus.

“Nothing visible yet,” remarked Harry calmly before screwing his eyes shut in concentration and his body changed shape and size. His hair became greasier and his nose became exceedingly hook like.

Before then sat a perfect duplicate of one Severus Snape and Sirius and Remus looked shocked.

“Of all the bloody people you had to turn into Harry, why did you have to turn into Snape?” asked Sirius in a slightly disgusted tone of voice.

“Really, Black, your lack of sophistication astounds me, but I suppose it would be foolish of me to expect anything less from a mongrel mutt that does nothing but sniff its own posterior all day long,” replied Harry in a perfect imitation of Severus Snape.

“Okay, Harry, now you’re giving me the creeps,” replied Sirius with a shudder.

“Potter, ten points from Gryffindor for sitting in your chair improperly,” declared Harry once again. “Always pompously strutting around this place, like your arrogant father, you are nothing but a fool Potter.”

Harry screwed his eyes completely shut before turning back into his six year old form.

“With this potion, I can turn into anyone I want for the next twelve hours,” replied Harry. “And the people I turn into don’t even have to exist either. Tricky little potion to brew and quite obscure, but very useful.”

Harry didn’t elaborate much further, but in reality, it was Hermione who had managed to create the potion, modifying an earlier formula for the Polyjuice Potion. Polyjuice Potion had taken way too much time to brew and the ingredient of a part of the person used for the disguise was always quite troublesome to get a hold of. With this potion, disguises had become easier, without needing to swipe someone else’s hair. Granted, they still needed to track down the proper ingredients and the potion was extremely tricky to create, but it took less time to brew than Polyjuice, along with the effects lasting twelve times as long. The only copy of the recipe was etched in Harry’s memories and Harry wasn’t willing to give up the knowledge to anyone, except for Hermione when she was ready to know. After all, it was only fair, as she was the one who had helped with the modifications to create the potion in the previous timeline.

"Now, time is of the essence I've got to get my hands on the Philosopher's Stone before Voldemort thinks of doing so," said Harry, turning to Sirius, Remus, and Antonio. "Antonio, do not interfere unless I say so, this is something I need to do on my own. I wouldn't want Dumbledore to put two and two together and figure out the truth."

"Of course," said Antonio. "I'll tell the other members of our organization to keep a safe distance from your dealings with this Philosopher Stone deal, Boss Potter."

"Harry, there's just one flaw in your plan," remarked Remus casually.

"And what's that, Remus?" asked Harry.

"Wouldn't something like the Philosopher's Stone be in Gringotts?" asked Remus.

"Potentially yes, but Flamel might need to periodically remove the Philosopher's Stone from his vault to replenish his stores of the Elixir of Life," replied Harry. "I'm just hoping that I'm lucky enough to catch Flamel during one of those times."

Harry paused, before a bit of a smirk appeared on his face.

"And if it isn't, I'll make him an offer that he'll be dead wrong to oppose," replied Harry calmly.

"And that's why you have that machine gun," said Sirius, eying the weapon that Harry had just hidden from view.

"No, that's to scare off members of the Kentucky Fried Chicken Club or the Order of the Phoenix," replied Harry calmly. "I'm rather curious to see whether or not magical shields will stop bullets."

"And you do know how to work that thing without injuring yourself right Harry?" asked Sirius, eying Harry with a bit of an apprehensive look on his face.

“Yes,” answered Harry shortly. “It’s really a last resort, I have my wand here but it doesn’t hurt to have a backup defense ready. I just hope I won’t be forced to use it.”

Harry took a deep breath before setting out with Antonio, Sirius, and Remus following him from his office.

Under his leadership, Lord Voldemort had amassed quite a variety of skilled Death Eaters. If they had not chosen to follow Voldemort, they had the potential to be leaders in their own right. These Death Eaters had chosen to take the easy way out, ready to follow their master, the Dark Lord, for the chance to get a bit of his power. Yet, the Death Eaters were a major reason why Lord Voldemort had gotten so far then he did and was recognized as one of the foremost Dark Wizards of all time.

And then, there was Crabbe and Goyle.

Crabbe and Goyle had been pleasantly shocked to see that the Dark Lord had returned to power. Before they had felt their marks burn, they had been searching Diagon Alley for Harry Potter, hoping to find the boy and bring him to Lucius Malfoy. As it turned out, Lucius had taken a sabbatical that caused him to be put in a prison cell in Azkaban.

It was a shock, but Crabbe and Goyle had a new job that they had eagerly accepted. The Dark Lord had found a way to return partially but the master needed to undergo a ritual to regain his full power. Each of the Death Eaters had separate tasks to gather different items important to the ritual.

“All right, the Dark Lord wants us to collect these items and by Merlin’s beard, we will not let our beloved lord down,” said Goyle in a sophisticated tone of voice, before consulting the dirty piece of parchment that the Dark Lord had given the two bumbling Death Eaters. “All right, let’s see, we need to procure milk, cheese, bread, eggs, bacon...what is it now, Crabbe, old bean?”

Crabbe just stared at Goyle with a vacant look on his face, his tongue flopping out of his mouth

“What do you blooming mean this looks like the Dark Lord’s grocery list?” asked Goyle incredulously. “Honestly, Crabbe, do you really think an upstanding citizen like the Dark Lord would deceive us like that? Come on, the Dark Lord would never mislead us, old bean. These are essential items for his full blown resurrection and nothing else.”

Crabbe just rolled his eyes when Goyle turned his back.

“Come forth, we must not fail the Dark Lord or we might become supper for one of his many snakes,” declared Goyle in a boisterous voice. “Tally ho my good man and onward!”

With that, the two Death Eaters moved forward, with determination not to fail their Master as they knew the consequences for not collecting all the items on the list they were given would be most severe indeed.

Outside of the Wizengamont, Albus Dumbledore swept inside quickly. His attempts to keep Harry Potter safe had went up in smoke. Not only had young Harry renounced Number Four Privet Drive as his home, but the Ministry of Magic had pounced on the Dursleys within a matter of minutes. By the time Dumbledore had arrived at the home, a scared Dudley Dursley had just had his memory modified by a group of Ministry wizards. Dumbledore had requested information but the Ministry wizards had been less than forthcoming about any information.

Later that morning, Dumbledore had found out Vernon Dursley had been administered the Dementor’s Kiss and Petunia Dursley was being held inside Azkaban, the first Muggle ever to see the inside of the prison. Dumbledore had found out that there were rumors that the Wizengamot were going to hold a hearing about his handling of Harry.

The worst part of all of this was that Dumbledore had found out this distressing news through the Daily Prophet, through the venomous writings of Rita Skeeter. His duties at Hogwarts had caused Dumbledore a bit of a delay but now he had some extra time where to arrive at the Ministry of Magic and try to convince them that they were making a big mistake.

"Excuse me, Dumbledore, but you can't go in there," declared one of the two Aurors guarding the entrances to the courtroom.

"I'm the Chief Warlock of the Wizengamot," declared Dumbledore in a kindly voice. "I see no reason why I shouldn't be authorized to enter this courtroom."

"You are determined to have a conflict of interest in the case of Harry Potter and are suspended from the Wizengamot pending further notice," replied the second Auror causing Dumbledore to do a double take.

"I never received notification of the sort," replied Dumbledore calmly, the twinkle in his eyes fading.

"Orders from Mr. Crouch, co-signed by Minister Bagnold, the owl may have just been sent out notifying you within the last hour," declared the first Auror calmly. "Even if I wanted to let you inside, Dumbledore, it's more than my job's worth."

Dumbledore stared at the two Aurors. They were skilled but Dumbledore felt he could have subdued them in a matter of minutes and forced his way inside the courtroom, but that wouldn't have done Albus one bit of good. Harry needed to be liberated from these mobsters that had abducted both Remus and Harry. Mobsters that Dumbledore had a sinking suspicion that were working with Sirius Black and other Death Eaters that escaped from Azkaban around the time that Harry had disappeared, in an attempt to bring Voldemort back. It was a rather outlandish theory, but Dumbledore had lived for long enough to understand that even the most outlandish theory was sometimes the most plausible.

"What is the meaning of this?" demanded a curt voice and Dumbledore turned around to see Bartemius Crouch bounding down the hallway, to turn and face Dumbledore. "Dumbledore, I hope for your sake you're not here attempting to meddle with the Wizengamot to get yourself seen in a better light with the Harry Potter case."

"Mr. Crouch, I just came here to see if the rumors I heard from Rita Skeeter were true," said Dumbledore calmly.

“Well, for once, most of everything that woman has written is not complete fabrication,” replied Crouch. “Even with our investigations only days old, we have verified some rather interesting things about the Potter will and the fact that you went over the head of the Ministry to put Potter in that home.”

“Now, Crouch, you must understand, I only wished to keep the boy safe and from undesirable elements,” declared Dumbledore calmly.

“I don’t know what you call magic loathing Muggles then, Dumbledore,” answered Crouch in a clipped tone of voice. “There are many who are quite interested in exactly how you took a personal interest to Harry Potter’s living arrangements after Lily and James Potter was murdered.”

“That is a matter that I cannot safely discuss here, Mr. Crouch,” responded Dumbledore.

“If I get my way Dumbledore, you’ll be discussing that matter in detail in the Wizengamot and others may weigh in on your shady dealings in great detail. Petunia Dursley is most willing to testify against you telling us the circumstances of her nephew being sent to her home, in exchange for being transferred from Azkaban into a regular Muggle prison,” replied Crouch curtly. “Right now, she remains in the highest security cells that we can manage.”

“Harry needed to be kept safe, surely the Wizengamot will be able to see that if this matter goes to court,” declared Dumbledore.

“That’s for the Wizengamot to decide,” replied Crouch shortly. “Now, I suggest you leave the Ministry of Magic immediately.”

Dumbledore nodded before turning but Crouch said one last thing.

“And Dumbledore, if I catch you in the Ministry again or having contact with anyone on the Wizengamot to attempt to sway their opinions, you’ll be arrested,” said Crouch in a dangerous tone of voice

Dumbledore walked off, the realization that he was being backed into a corner by Crouch. From his dealings with Crouch, Dumbledore

knew of the man's ability to pounce upon any weaknesses whatsoever. Even with the scandal with Crouch's son as a Death Eater, the man still had a fair bit of power in the Ministry and many friends in high places. With the recent capture of the Dursleys, who had been painted in a very unfavorable light by Rita Skeeter, Crouch was in the position to move up in the Ministry, all the way to Minister of Magic. The only thing Dumbledore could think to save his reputation would be to track down Harry and save him from his mobster captures, bringing the child to safety. It was by chance that Dumbledore had found the mob representatives that had Harry last time and Dumbledore would be a fool if he had relied on chance twice in a row.

Dumbledore had no choice. He had to find Harry before the Ministry of Magic did. The Ministry would no doubt use the boy for their own gains, training him up to be their own personal attack dog against dark wizards. Harry would be nothing but a tool of the Ministry and Dumbledore could not allow that to happen.

The home of Nicolas and Perenelle Flamel gave the aura of being high class but cozy in its own right. Harry Potter walked through the gates which seemed to swing open on their own accord. The defeater of Lord Voldemort and the youngest mob boss ever moved towards the front door in his elaborate disguise. He gave off the picture of a middle aged man, perhaps in his late forties or early fifties with dark red hair that was slightly graying. His face had some wrinkles but his brown eyes showed signs of determination. The thing that disguised his true identity the most of all was the fact that the lightning bolt scar was no longer prominent on his forehead.

Harry looked forward and raised his hand, before knocking three times on the door of the Flamel residence.

The door opened seconds later and the man standing greeting Harry looked to be quite the sight. He had long grey hair in dreadlocks, that were underneath a red and yellow bandanna, along with a multi colored tie-dyed t-shirt. He wore a striped kilt over a pair of zebra striped pants, along with wearing socks underneath a pair of sandals.

“Excuse me, I’m looking for Nicolas Flamel,” declared Harry with a complete straight face, which was rather difficult considering the man’s attire.

“You’re speaking to him, young man,” declared the eccentric looking man. “May I ask why you’re here?”

“I’m here to steal the Philosopher’s Stone,” declared Harry in a cheerful, nonchalant tone of voice.

“Well, you’re only the third person to try that this week,” replied Flamel calmly. “Why don’t you come in and have a cup of tea before we get down to business?”

“Of course,” said Harry calmly before following Flamel down the hallway.

“I thought you might have been that punk brat Dumbledore here, wanting me to give up the Stone for the so-called greater good,” remarked Flamel in a casual tone of voice. “It’s bad enough that the wife nags me about it, but no one forced the Elixir of Life down her throat. Besides, I have some rather ambitious goals in life that must be completed before I can comfortably rest in peace.”

“What would that be, Mr. Flamel?” asked Harry curiously. “World peace, ending world hunger, preventing corruption with the Ministry, stopping Malfoys from breeding any further and giving their offspring incredibly stupid names.”

“All the unfortunate plots and delusion plots of dreamers, I have a more logical and realistic aim in mind,” answered Flamel. “No, before I die, I wish to complete my collection of Chocolate Frog Cards.”

Harry knew because of Flamel’s attire he should have suspected something of the sort but it still took him by surprise, as they arrived in the kitchen where Flamel moved over to make both a cup of tea.

“I’m nearly completed with my quest, I just need to get my hands on that Morgana card that has eluded me for these many years,” said Flamel, continuing talking as he made the tea. “So you have decided to steal my Philosopher’s Stone Mr...”

“Evan Harold Jameson,” declared Harry quickly, mentally slapping himself for not thinking of a cover name before and scrambling for this sadly uncreative substitute. “Do people try and steal the Philosopher’s Stone that often?”

“Ah yes, everyone from dark lords to greedy vandals who just want extra gold, about eight hundred and twenty three attempts on the Stone so far in my life if I’m not mistaken,” replied Flamel . “Mr. Jameson, it isn’t so much the worry about losing the Philosopher’s Stone in this house, as they just come here to attempt to coerce me to lead them to the Gringotts vault.”

“So, the Stone isn’t in the Vault,” said Harry calmly.

“Oh dear me, did I let that slip out?” asked Flamel sheepishly. “Well that will make the game quite interesting but Mr. Jameson, I can confirm there is something in my Gringotts vault and since you would seem like to be an honest enough person if it wasn’t for the fact that you were after my stone.”

Flamel took a deep breath, before looking thoughtful.

“The Philosopher’s Stone inside my vault is a duplicate of the real thing,” continued Flamel. “And not a cheap duplicate mind you, but few have the knowledge to recognize the fake stone for what it truly is. It’s nearly the same, but there are alterations to the main properties of the stone.”

Flamel returned to the table with two cups of tea, sliding one towards Harry.

“Don’t worry, it’s not poisoned, if anything I am a sporting man and would like to play the game properly,” remarked Flamel. “Scan it for any foreign substances if you must but I don’t slip potions into other people’s tea. That’s more of a Dumbledore thing to do really.”

Harry did and found the tea to be clean so Harry put the cup up to his mouth and began sipping the liquid.

“What kind of alterations, exactly, Mr. Flamel?” asked Harry in a curious voice.

“Oh, nothing major,” replied Flamel. “The gold making properties of the stone make Leprechaun Gold as opposed to real gold. As for the Elixir of Life, well the Stone does create an Elixir but it turns a person to stone, instead of forestalling their death.”

Harry felt a flush of agony. He had gone to all the trouble of getting the Stone during his first year, all for a carefully elaborated fake. The thing was that Dumbledore was none the wiser that his mentor had given him a fake Stone to hide.

“So, exactly why do you want to steal the stone, Mr. Jameson?” questioned Flamel. “Just a bit of morbid curiosity if you don’t mind me asking.”

“I want to smash it to bits, to stop Lord Voldemort to return to his full power,” remarked Harry calmly.

“That’s the best damn reason I heard for attempting to steal my Stone ever,” replied Flamel in a pleased voice. “I’ll make you a deal, Mr. Jameson. If you can guess where I have the Stone hidden, then I will personally hand it to you and you will walk out of here without a scratch on you.”

“And if I don’t guess the location of the Stone?” asked Harry.

“Then you’ll be asked to leave empty handed and memory modified,” remarked Flamel. “Just guess the location of the Stone.”

“You’ve hidden the Philosopher’s Stone underneath your mattress,” suggested Harry, taking a stab in the dark.

“I applaud your efforts Mr. Jameson, that’s exactly where the Stone is,” replied Flamel. “Most people guess a secret underground chamber, a vault behind a painting, or they just attempt to curse me instead.”

“So, you’ll give it to me, no tricks,” prompted Harry in a slightly disbelieving voice.

“No tricks, Mr. Jameson,” declared Flamel and at that moment, a loud banging sound echoed from downstairs. “Excuse for a moment, I

have another visitor and they didn't have the decency to knock. Extremely rude of them."

Flamel made his way from the kitchen, wand in hand. The curious nature of a six-year-old got the better of Harry, as he crept his way around the corner and peered around the corner.

"Listen here, Madam, if you're here to steal the Philosopher's Stone, I'm afraid someone has already done just that," declared Flamel calmly to a woman who had a hood pulled over her face, obscuring her features.

"I don't want your bloody stone, I'm interested in a very rare tome you have," hissed the woman dangerously. "Now, I suggest you move out of the way..."

"Madam, with all respect, I really hope you don't want to try and duel me," declared Flamel. "I've forgotten more about magic than many will ever know."

"Out of the way, you old windbag!" yelled the woman, sending a jagged jet of purple light from her wand, which Flamel quickly and expertly deflected. The woman seemed to not be deterred and she jabbed her wand, causing every window in the bottom level of the Flamel residence to shatter.

Broken glass flew every which direction as the woman rushed up a set of stairs. Flamel staggered backwards, nearly losing his balance.

"Curse my hip," declared Flamel in a pained voice. "Even with the Elixir, these centuries take their toll."

Harry casually slipped, following the woman up the stairs with Flamel hobbling behind the both of them.

"Freeze," declared Harry calmly, deciding to use the effects of the potion to make his features slightly more menacing.

"Out of the way!" yelled the woman, slashing her wand towards Harry like a sword. Harry's eyes widened, recognizing this curse as the same one that Dolohov had used in the Department of Mysteries on

Hermione. The Boy-Who-Lived managed to barely block it with a shield charm, but the amount of magic used to block the cursed caused Harry to become dizzy and fall to the side, barely hanging onto the wall to keep from collapsing to the ground.

The woman had broke doors of a large library open, before moving inside. She waved her wand, causing the doors to seal themselves shut. Another charm caused a protective spell to wrap itself around the doors.

Flamel made his way upstairs.

“She went into the library,” supplied Harry helpfully, wheezing slightly in weakness. He hoped he wouldn’t have been in a position to do any more spell work today and Flamel looked at Harry with a shocked look on his face, before turning towards the library door.

Flamel raised his wand, assessing the situation. It appeared this woman had warded the door in which it would take a normal wizard a matter of moments to break through. For Flamel, it only took maybe thirty seconds to bust the doors open and find his way into the room. Flamel walked inside but the woman had seemed to slip out just in the nick of time, breaking another window on her way out. Walking through the shelves, Flamel saw that nearly all of the books remained there. Only one tome was missing from his collection.

A large and rare book on complete sex change rituals, a practice that had been outlawed over four hundred years ago by the Ministry had been missing due to a decline of pureblood witches. It turned out that many young witches had been turned into wizards for zealous pureblood families to create a male heir for some twisted form of respect. Flamel was baffled about why someone would steal such a book, as the magic within was quite complex and the punishments for being caught even attempting the magic were quite severe by the Ministry.

Flamel exited the library, before turning to the pale looking wizard who was just regaining some form of composure.

“She just managed to escape before I reached her, Mr. Potter,” declared Flamel in a calm voice which caused Harry to look up at the old eccentrically dressed wizard in complete shock.

Chapter Ten: The Best Laid Plans.

Harry stared at Flamel, with a shocked expression on his face.

"I'm sure you're wondering how I figured out your true identity, Harry Potter," remarked Flamel.

"Yes, that thought did cross my mind," replied Harry swiftly. "I checked and double checked that bloody potion, nothing was wrong, how in the bloody hell did you see through my disguise!"

"The potion worked well, but for a brief moment, a distinguishing feature appeared on your forehead, Mr. Potter," answered Flamel. "That lightning bolt scar that appeared when Lord Voldemort failed to kill you. No one has a scar like yours."

Flamel took a deep breath as Harry stood there, just in shock. He wanted to see what the ancient wizard was to say next.

"So, how did you manage it, Mr. Potter?" asked Flamel.

"Manage what, Mr. Flamel," remarked Harry in a casual voice, not wanting to give away the fact that his soul had traveled back twenty years unless he was sure Flamel had guessed it.

"Sending your past self back into your body, naturally," replied Flamel. "You see, there could be no other explanation, as no other six year old could come so close in prying the Philosopher's Stone away from me, without help. And since I can tell possession a mile off, the only logical explanation to me would be some type of time travel."

"Truthfully, it was an accident, I was hoping to wipe Voldemort and his Death Eaters out by turning my magic into an explosive element, not unlike a Muggle nuclear weapon," explained Harry. "I was knocked out for a couple of minutes and woke up in my six year old body."

"The best magical discoveries have been by pure accident," muttered Flamel, more to himself than Harry. "There must have been circumstances that caused your travel back in time."

Flamel looked deep in thought and seemed less eccentric at the moment.

"Time travel is an odd curiosity," remarked Flamel. "Even time travel a few hours back could cause drastic changes that could warp reality itself. However, the fact that your future self was sent back into your younger body suggests that you won't be able to return to the future like normal time travel."

Flamel paused, as if mentally confirming a theory.

"Which the only logical explanation and believe me time travel can be anything but logical, is that you are creating a new, alternate reality," declared Flamel. "The events of this reality will be drastically different from the one you remember. Exactly how long have you been back in time?"

"About two weeks," declared Harry.

"So, if you were desperate enough to come back, that means that you already changed things that lead to Voldemort coming back in the regular timeline," said Flamel thoughtfully looking at Harry who nodded in confirmation. "The damage has already been done. Now granted, it might not be damage to you or me. Then again it might be. One of three things could happen. Number one, the timeline could lead to an even more horrifying future than the one you can come. Number Two, your efforts are a noble endeavor and lead to a better world for all, well except for maybe Lord Voldemort and his minions. Or number three, despite your efforts, the end result comes out to be the same, even if a slightly different course of events leads there."

"So I take it you are discouraging me from making any further changes in the timeline," said Harry.

"No, of course not, I'm just telling you my theories," declared Flamel waving his hand. "I'll leave the discouraging to the likes of Dumbledore and the Ministry of Magic, but they are quite narrow minded and can't already see that what has already happened can't be undone. But, I doubt you will not be telling them about your condition anytime soon."

"Of course not," replied Harry.

"Very well, back to the subject of the Philosopher's Stone," replied Flamel. "I now believe you more than ever that Lord Voldemort wants his hands on it, because there is no doubt in my mind that you already lived through an attempt of his to steal it."

"Quite right," confirmed Harry.

"Very well, I will give you the Stone and you will dispose of it in any way you see fit," remarked Flamel before adding in an undertone. "I have enough elixir in my stores to supply myself and my wife for the next twenty years. That should be enough time to finish my goals."

"If you don't mind me for asking, what did that woman want from your library?" asked Harry out of morbid curiosity,

"This gets stranger by the moment, with all my notes on the creation of the Philosopher's Stone in the library, she stole a very old book on sex change rituals," answered Flamel. "These rituals were outlawed by the Ministry centuries ago. It seemed that there were a diminishing number of pureblood witches and naturally, the Ministry felt it reflected badly on them. As it turns out, there were many old families who used sex changes rituals to turn their daughters into sons."

"Why?" asked Harry.

"It's a pureblood thing," remarked Flamel. "Basically, many purebloods didn't have more than one child back then and they wanted wizards, so they can keep their considerable wealth in the families. Like many other dark arts, this had complications, leading to more squibs then before. The Ministry of Magic outlawed the rituals. They were lost and I have one of the few books detailing one such ritual that was used. This ritual however is very difficult to pull off and is well beyond the capacity of most."

Harry sat deep in thought, wondering what crackpot would want a book on sex change rituals but a loud banging noise echoed from downstairs.

"I seem to be quite popular today," muttered Flamel in an off handed voice. "Excuse me for just one moment."

Flamel moved down the stairs and Harry watched from the stairs, doing a double take as he saw Flamel face to face with a Death Eater.

"Hand over the stone, Flamel," declared the Death Eater and Harry blinked, he knew that voice all too well. He had only heard it in every Potions class for six years, mostly making snide remarks towards him and other Gryffindors.

Harry crept down the stairs, with his wand in hand. Revenge was the order of the day; he wanted to rip that greasy hair out of Snape's head one strand at a time with a powerful summoning charm.

"The Stone?" asked Flamel. "I'm afraid I'm going to have to deny that request."

Snape slashed his wand towards Flamel, but the wizard avoided Snape's spell and the spell blew a hole through the wall.

Harry aimed his wand over his shoulder, before nearly collapsing. It seemed his magic was still going haywire from blocking that curse against that mysterious woman.

Snape spun around, before staring at the figure creeping in the shadows.

"Whoever you are, you've been a critical error in visiting this place, today, I'm afraid," declared Snape coldly, before putting his wand. "AVADA KEDAVRA!"

Harry decided the best way to avoid this curse would be to throw himself on the ground. The curse sailed over Harry and hit an ugly looking vase, causing it to shatter into dust.

"CRUCIO!" yelled Snape, sending a spell at Harry. Harry cursed himself, having been caught off guard by the curse and he screamed in pain, attempting to reach over, before removing the gun from his person.

Three shots were fired in succession at Snape, causing the Death Eater's concentration to break. He recognized the weapon this mystery wizard was carrying at once and he managed to blast two of the bullets out of mid air with his wand.

Unfortunately for Snape, he wasn't lucky to block the third bullet. The bullet impacted his wand hand, causing Snape to fall to the ground, in agony as blood dripped from his hand.

"The Ministry of Magic will be very interested to see you here...Snivellus," whispered Harry. "Dumbledore won't be able to save you this time."

Despite the fact that blood dripped from his wand hand, Snape managed to reach into his robes and pull out the Portkey that he had on him at all times. He tapped his wand to the Portkey as it pulled himself to safety.

Harry cursed himself, he should have checked for Portkeys. His six year old self's immaturity got the better of him and he just had to stop to taunt Snape for a few seconds. A few seconds that caused Snape to get away even though Harry could claim a bit of a moral victory by injuring Snape's wand hand.

"Mr. Potter, I think it's best to get you out of here with the Stone before someone else decides to come to visit," declared Flamel. "I think I can handle anyone else, I do have over six hundred years of magical experience after all."

Harry nodded, wishing that he had shot Snape in a place more lethal than the hand.

Some time later at the Hogwarts Hospital Wing, Severus Snape was quite agitated. Someone had got the better of him without magic and force him to flee like a coward. He didn't get the Stone like the Dark Lord had ordered him to do and Dumbledore was asking awkward questions about where he was when he got shot. One thing was for certain, Snape vowed one day to get his hands on the person who did this to him and avenge his humiliation. Severus Snape would not rest until he had this wizard on his knees, begging for mercy.

At a rural area, Crabbe and Goyle snuck towards a hen house, wands drawn.

“Come forth, I say, let us collect the Dark Lord’s bounty, so he can return to full power,” declared Goyle in a boisterous voice. “I mean, what better way to collect eggs then from a hen house.”

Crabbe responded by a blank look, his tongue hanging out of his mouth, drool flowing to his chin.

“What do you mean we can bloody go to a grocery store and purchase them?” demanded Goyle. “Listen here, we are purebloods of the highest pedigree and we will not be demeaned to purchasing eggs. As the head of the noble and ancient house of Goyle, I am quite frankly baffled that you would suggest that we undertake this matter in such a way.”

Crabbe just stared at Goyle.

“Must you rub in that your family has been pureblood for two more generations than mine has,” grumbled Goyle. “Sometimes Crabbe, old bean, you can come across as quite the braggart.”

Crabbe just rolled his eyes, but Goyle had moved inside the hen house, with his wand in his hand. Rows upon rows of hens laid no doubt with eggs ripe for the taking.

Goyle reached under one of the hens, feeling around underneath it with his hands. The hen didn’t take too kindly to the Goyle’s theft her eggs and started to cluck madly. This set off a chain reaction with all of the hens clucking at once, which caused Goyle to stagger backwards.

Goyle raised his wand, the thought slowly coming to him that he would have been better off of using a summoning charm to procure the eggs. Before Goyle could do the deed, he heard a loud noise and spun around to see a large and very proud looking rooster standing in the doorway.

“Merlin, get a look at the size of that cock, Crabbe,” declared Goyle, as the rooster stood proudly before moving towards Goyle. “Listen, we are just here for some eggs, so if you could just...”

The rooster clamped its beak down on Goyle’s crotch. Goyle screamed in agony, as the rooster wouldn’t let go.

“Oh, this bloody cock has me by the...” started Goyle before screaming in agony. “Crabbe..do...something...chap.”

Crabbe looked at his wand, starting blankly at it. He aimed a slicing charm towards the rooster’s head but his aim was sadly a bit off.

Goyle gave a scream of agony as he fell to the ground, blood dripping to the ground. The rooster lunged for Crabbe but Crabbe managed to get out of the way. Goyle followed, barely able to walk as the rooster stood, guarding the hen house. Blood dripped from Goyle, as the two bumbling Death Eaters moved off, to avoid being attacked by the rogue rooster.

Monday morning had come before Harry had known it. It was agreed that Antonio would take care of any pressing business that needed to be resolved during the day. Harry had figured out that the really interesting stuff didn’t happen until at night or on the weekends. Indeed, the weekend before, Harry’s mobsters had an altercation with Boss Zabini’s men. It was over a part of London that Harry knew for a fact that he had full and undisputed rights to. Harry had not been present, but those who were there relayed the story to him in great detail. Still, Zabini tried and pulled a coup to run his rivals out of there, which backfired for Zabini. Harry felt pleased that he had gotten his first noticeable victory and planned to regain much of the turf that his mob had lost to Zabini in the confusion of Harry’s grandfather’s death. The Boy-Who-Lived-Twice had tentative plans to branch out his operations into the Magical World to better be able to combat Voldemort. That was some time coming, as Harry wished to regain the turf that was lost to Zabini before booting his rival off the map and taking all of his turf.

Still, by night and by weekends, Harry was a mob boss. By day, he was a somewhat normal six year old child, who attended school like most others his age.

Harry looked around, as he saw a few hundred young children chatting merrily, talking about things that Harry found that he wasn't interested in. Still he was only interested in looking for one person. After a couple of moments of intense searching, Harry spotted Hermione sitting underneath a tree, reading a book.

"Typical Hermione," muttered Harry fondly under his breath, before walking over towards his friend and bending down next to her. "Hello, Hermione."

Hermione's head snapped upwards, her eyes looking forward in shock. No one had spoken directly to her at school, most content to speak about her behind her back. She relaxed when she saw it was only Harry.

"Harry," said Hermione in surprise before deciding to voice her opinion. "What are you doing here?"

"Going to school, believe it or not," said Harry with a smile. "I've heard a rumor that most kids my age do that."

Hermione giggled in spite herself as Harry sat down next to her. A group of girls turned around and seemed to be perplexed by Harry sitting next to Hermione. A girl with blond hair and blue eyes seemed to take it upon herself to walk over and stick her nose into Harry and Hermione's business.

"What do you want?" asked Hermione, her eyes narrowing.

"Now, Hermione, there's no need to be rude," said the girl in a sugary sweet voice that caused Harry to get Umbridge flashbacks. The girl had turned her attention to Harry before speaking in a bubbly voice. "Hi, you must be new!"

"Yes," said Harry in a neutral voice, trying to be polite as possible. He didn't want to start trouble on his first day of school but sometimes trouble was quite unavoidable. "Name's Harry."

"Well my name's Evelyn," said the girl who was ignoring Hermione. "You know, you don't have to be nice to her. She's weird, she does nothing but read books."

"Excuse me, Hermione happens to be my best friend," declared Harry in a cool voice.

"No, I want you to be my friend," declared Evelyn in a forceful force, before flashing a smile at Harry. "I'm so much more fun than her. I mean she has buck teeth and her hair...it's all bushy."

"If I didn't know any better, I would think you think you're better than Hermione," replied Harry calmly.

"I am better than her, really, all she does is read books and ignore everyone, like she's stuck up" said Evelyn who seemed to be distressed that this wasn't going her way. Things always went her way, her parents had spoiled her. "I mean, what's she going to do, marry her books or something."

"You know, I don't like you," replied Harry calmly. "You come here and make fun of the only friend I've ever had. Just leave go with your little friends and leave us alone."

"Fine!" pouted Evelyn. "See if I care if you hang out with the buck toothed bookworm. She'll be the only friend you'll ever have, as I'll tell everyone else how mean you are and how you're just like her."

"If the rest of them are like you, it sounds good to me," said Harry with a smirk, and the girl seemed to be put off by the fact that Harry was brushing off her threats like they were nothing. She stomped off, to no doubt spread nasty lies about Harry to her friends.

"Harry, thank you for not taking her side," said Hermione gratefully. "But, Evelyn's popular. She could make your life miserable."

"It's a good thing I'm not here to win a popularity contest, Hermione and I'd rather have true friends, than people who hang over me because of popularity," said Harry before adding to her. "What time does class start anyway?"

"In a few minutes, I think it might be a good idea if I show you where it is, Harry," said Hermione.

“Agreed, don’t want to make a bad impression on my first day,” replied Harry and Hermione led him into the school, the two friends chatting as they entered the school.

Little did Harry know that someone else was watching him in the distance. The dark haired girl had been very surprised to see that Harry Potter of all people was attending a Muggle school. Yet there was no mistaking him.

Blaise ran her fingers through her hair, sighing. She was no silly fangirl, tripping over her own feet at the sight of Harry Potter by any means. Still, she wished to have a word for him, for no other reason to talk to another one of her kind. These Muggles could be a bit frustrating to interact with, as they lacked sophistication and poise. She nearly felt ill watching that Evelyn Simmons girl attempt to interact with Potter by acting like a bubbling twit. Then again, Blaise had heard things about how people with blond hair lacked brains. That was proven that one time she had the misfortune of meeting Draco Malfoy.

Blaise walked into the school, hoping to get Potter alone so she could talk to him.

Harry and Hermione were among the first to arrive in their classroom, taking seats towards the front of the classroom. Others arrived after the first bell rang, filling in the seats. Evelyn and her friends seemed to look at Harry with contempt, but Harry gave them a small, sarcastic wave, which caused them to walk off in a huff. Many looked at Harry as a curiosity, but didn’t interact with them.

A middle aged man entered the room, most of what used to blond hair turning gray. He had a sneer on his face, as if teaching young children was well beneath him.

“I am Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire,” declared the teacher in a pompous voice. “And I say this because we have a new student today joining us. “

Harry looked up, blinking.

“Well, come up here, Mr. Potter,” declared Gillworth in a commanding voice and Harry rose to his feet, before standing at the front of the class, several eyes on him. “Class, this is Harry Potter. Harry Potter, this is your class. Are there any questions?”

The class broke out into whispers, looking at Harry, and pointing at his messy hair, some snickering at it.

“Very well then, sit down and let’s get this day over with,” declared Gillworth in a bored voice as Harry sat down next to Hermione. “Now, last week, I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the third, Esquire, were attempting to teach you children the subtle art of mathematics. Mathematics is a wonderful thing, yet something that many can’t to grasp. Perhaps one or two of you might be able to grasp these concepts but with the low opinion I have on your futures, I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire, doubt it very much.”

Gillworth made his way towards the chalk board, before picking up a piece of chalk and writing a problem on the board. Harry leaned forward and saw that the problem was seventy four multiplied by forty three. A problem that Harry felt in his infinite wisdom was beyond the brain capacity of most six and seven year olds.

“Now, perhaps one of you can solve this simple equation,” declared Gillworth. “First person who does it will be exempt from homework tonight.

“Oh come on, not even I can get this one, not that math’s my strong suit mind you,” muttered Harry but Hermione had a piece of paper and a pencil out and seemed to be bound and determined to solve the problem. Harry doubted very much that she wanted to be exempt from homework. On contrary, Harry believed it was just her ambition shining through.

Hermione had put down her pencil in triumph but Gillworth had walked over and picked up Hermione’s work, before examining it.

“Well what’s this, Miss Granger, passing notes in my class,” said Gillworth.

“No, that’s my work,” said Hermione quickly.

"Now, Miss Granger, there is no reason to lie to me, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the third, Esquire," declared Gillworth, who had picked up the paper and walked forward, before it appeared to slip out of his hand and onto Evelyn's desk. The paper had remained on her desk for a few seconds before Gillworth quickly picked it up.

"Professor, I know the answer," said Evelyn, raising her hand.

"Very, well, Miss Simmons, what is the answer?" asked Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire.

"Three thousand one hundred and eighty two," responded Evelyn brightly.

"That's correct, Miss Simmons, it appears that at least one person in this class has a degree of intelligence," remarked Gillworth. "You are hereby excused for this evening's homework."

"Thanks Uncle Remy er I mean Professor Remington Q Gillworth the Third, Esquire," replied Evelyn flashing a smile at her friends, who giggled.

"She doesn't deserve to be let off the hook," declared Harry.

"Harry, no, it's not worth it," muttered Hermione under her breath.

"That was Hermione's work and you knew it, *Uncle Remy*," replied Harry, putting added emphasis on the last two words.

"Now, Mr. Potter, your friend was caught passing notes, Miss Simmons solved the problem fair and square," replied Gillworth.

"That wasn't a note. That was her hard work in solving that problem. A problem that is too difficult for most kids our age to even think about solving I might add!" yelled Harry and the chalk erasers began to vibrate and Harry took a few deep breaths to calm down. The last thing he needed was a spontaneous burst of accidental magic that would destroy the classroom.

"Really, calling math a problem, I prefer to think of it as an adventure," declared Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third,

Esquire. "Much like your friend Miss Granger, you can't seem to be able to distinguish books from reality. You will continue to struggle in my class, if you come in with preconceived notions."

Harry said nothing. Years of dealing with Severus Snape and his favoritism towards Slytherins had told him it was best not to say anything further to the teacher.

Back at the farm, Crabbe and Goyle crept around, attempting to salvage their plans.

"Thanks to your bungling Crabbe, I will no longer be able to conceive any more children," replied Goyle and Crabbe responded with a blank stare. "Oh really funny, Crabbe. As usual, I will ignore your degrading statements made towards my person."

Goyle sighed before looking around.

"Our attempt to get eggs was an absolute failure, but perhaps we will be better off with tracking down a cow and procuring some milk," suggested Goyle. "Yes, that is the ticket, we milk the cow and we will worry about the other items on the Dark Lord's acquisition list at a later date."

Crabbe looked at Goyle with a vapid expression.

"For the last time you bungler, we are not taking a trip to the grocery store and buying these items like some commoner!" snapped Goyle angrily. "Now come forth and let us proceed with the scheme."

Goyle waved his wand, opening the gate that led to the pasture. The wizard walked in and found himself face to face with a bull. The bull looked up at Goyle and seemed to be angered.

"Oh dear," muttered Goyle in a fretful voice and the bull rose to its feet before charging Goyle. The Death Eater panicked and sent a stinging spell at the bull, but that seemed to only enrage the animal.

The bull rushed Goyle and rammed him, causing the large man to fly into the air. Crabbe stood away.

"Yes, just let me get bludgeoned Crabbe!" yelled Goyle, as the bull had stepped on Goyle's wand, shattering it in two. Goyle scrambled to his feet, looking shocked and quite petrified but Crabbe had removed his wand from his person and conjured a large red cloth.

Crabbe waved the cloth in front of the bull and the bull charged forward, seeing absolute red. Goyle laid on the ground, as Crabbe caused the bull to move forward. At the last second, with surprising grace, Crabbe yanked the red cloth out of the way. The bull hit headfirst into a tree and Crabbe used this momentary distraction to wave his wand, causing the bull to drift into a deep sleep.

Goyle pulled himself to his feet, looking a bit shaken.

"That's right, a bull is not going to make a fool out of me," declared Goyle in a pompous voice. "No bloody animal is going to trifle with Goyle, my dear lad. Crabbe, I had that thing on the run and I softened him up. Being the charitable fellow I am, I allowed you to proceed for the kill."

Crabbe rolled his eyes behind Goyle's back, before adopting his usual blank and vapid expression as Goyle turned around. Goyle surveyed Crabbe, whose tongue was hanging out of his mouth, cross eyed and drooling.

"Unfortunately, that beast broke my wand in his uncouth rampage," said Goyle. "We must make a quest to Knockturn Alley, in where I acquire a replacement."

With that, the two Death Eaters had left to continue the mission the Dark Lord had entrusted them with.

At lunch, Hermione and Harry sat outside.

"Harry, I never thought I'd say this, but that man's not a good teacher," replied Hermione.

"What, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third?" asked Harry before pausing dramatically. "Esquire."

"Yes, him," replied Hermione calmly. "He doesn't explain anything and it seems he really doesn't like children at all."

"Except for his demonic harpy of a niece," muttered Harry under his breath before brightening up. "Of course, he's been making my life miserable for the last few hours and it looks like he's been making your life miserable since the beginning of this year, so you do know what that means?"

"Harry, I suppose we should tell someone about how he's a bad teacher," said Hermione in a resigned voice. "The problem is, how do we prove it?"

"We could tell someone," confirmed Harry. "Run the risk that they won't believe us. That would be doing things the easy way"

A mischievous smile appeared on Harry's face.

"Or we can do things my way, the fun way," added Harry. "The cure to all that ails world, pranks."

"Harry, we can't just prank the teacher," said Hermione. "We could get in so much trouble."

"Yes, we could, if we get caught," answered Harry. "And I never get caught."

"I don't know, Harry," muttered Hermione who seemed conflicted.

"Hermione, you can be smart and pull pranks," suggested Harry. "You remember Remus, right?"

"He's the guy who came with you and Uncle Antonio to dinner when we met, right?" asked Hermione.

"Yes, and he had good marks in school," replied Harry. "Along with my father and godfather, who also got good marks, they were legendary pranksters in school."

"Well, Harry, I guess life can't be all books," replied Hermione. "Still, if we get caught..."

“Just a few small pranks to see if you feel comfortable, Hermione,” said Harry, giving his friend puppy dog eyes. It had caused Hermione to give into him in the old timeline, so he saw no reason why it shouldn’t work here. “Pretty please with sugar on top. We’ll stop if we get caught, I swear.”

“Alright Harry, I’ll give it a try,” said Hermione, caving into Harry. “And it’s not because you flashed those eyes at me, it’s because I’m your friend and I guess I trust you.”

“Don’t worry Hermione. I’m like magic,” said Harry with a knowing smile.

“It’d be much easier if we actually could do magic,” muttered Hermione with a far off expression in her eyes.

“We need to get back inside if we are going to pull this off,” explained Harry and Hermione followed him, still with a bit of an apprehensive look on her face.

After lunch, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire appeared with a bit of a cheerful expression on his face.

“Greetings children, your teacher, I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire, is here to impart your meaningless lives with more education, before we meet that happy moment of farewell at the end of the day,” declared Gillworth. “Such a joyous occasion that final bell, as it marks the longest time I have until I teach you inept boobs once again.”

Several giggles broke out in the class.

“Yes, I am aware that boobs is a humorous word to you brats, but I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire, shall not be distracted from earning my paycheck,” declared Gillworth pompously. “Nevertheless, I’m in a good mood, so I will write this sentence on the board and you will circle all the words that rhyme with each other.”

Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire began writing on the chalkboard and had written an entire sentence. Harry neither

knew nor cared what it said, all he knew was that his prank had worked.

“Er, Professor,” said one of the children, a boy with short brown hair.

“What is it, Mr. Dixon?” asked Gillworth, narrowing his eyes at the boy.

“Sir, there’s no sentence on the board,” said Dixon.

“What don’t be ridiculous, of course there...is,” declared Gillworth but he saw a completely blank chalk board. “I could have just sworn that I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire, had just written a tongue twisting sentence upon the board but perhaps even I was mistaken.”

Gillworth had written the sentence on the board a second time and had turned his back on the board. Once again, his words had vanished and he spun around angrily.

“This is an outrage,” declared Gillworth, and for a third time, he had written a sentence on the board. He slowly turned around and once again the sentence had vanished.

Hermione and Harry could barely hold in their laughter but they didn’t want to distract Gillworth from his impending meltdown. So simultaneous, they both dove under their desks under the guise of picking up a pencil.

Gillworth gritted his teeth and began to shake, before once again writing the sentence. Once again, the sentence vanished from sight.

“No, my chalkboard’s haunted!” yelled Gillworth, losing his head causing most of the children to laugh. “Stop laughing, stop it, this isn’t funny, I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire...”

Gillworth ran from the room looking rather disturbed as Harry and Hermione’s had laughed so hard that tears began rolling down their cheeks but had managed to calm themselves down just before the laughter died down.

Evelyn had gotten to her feet and the girl looked rather flummoxed. She marched over to Harry and Hermione, with her hands plastered on her hips and she looked enraged.

"You two think you're really amusing, don't you?" asked Evelyn.

"No, we thought Uncle Remy running from the room muttering about a haunted chalk board was funny," said Harry in a calm voice.

"You were the one who did that, you made the chalk disappear, I know it, you two....nerds," declared Evelyn.

"Come off it, it's not like we magically put a spell on the chalkboard to make anything written on it vanish," replied Harry, with a smirk.

"Plus, it's not like you can prove it, you know," said Hermione, with a smug expression.

"I know you did it, I do," hissed Evelyn, before stamping back to her seat and Harry had used the wand hidden up his sleeve before fixing the chalkboard. His fun was far from done.

Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire marched back into the room, with a thick woman with grey hair, spectacles, and a large nose.

"Headmistress, four times the chalkboard erased itself when I wrote on it, there has to be some kind of ghosts or poltergeists," declared Gillworth in a slightly unhinged voice.

"Is this like the time that the Leprechauns were stalking you, Gillworth?" asked the Headmistress, surveying Gillworth over his spectacles.

"They were trying to steal my socks," interjected Gillworth. "It's like magic, it's got to be magic, there's no other explanation."

"Sure magic, that's your excuse for everything Gillworth, always blame something that doesn't exist," declared the Headmistress before picking up a piece of chalk and drawing a rather crude circle. "Well, your haunted chalkboard must have been a hallucination."

"No, Headmistress, we all saw it," piped up Evelyn. "Potter and Granger did something to the chalkboard."

"Did you then do anything to it?" asked the Headmistress, with a frown.

"No, but I just know they did," declared Evelyn in a stubborn voice. "They're freaks, anyway..."

"I will not tolerate you making fun of other students Miss Simmons," remarked the Headmistress sternly. "Now if you excuse me, I have too much to do then to listen to your hallucinations, Professor Gillworth."

The Headmistress left the room leaving Gillworth stuttering before he turned to the class.

"Free day the rest of the day," declared Gillworth in an irritated voice. "Finish your homework, stare at the ceiling, punch each other out, I don't care."

Most of the students cheered as Gillworth had sank down into his chair, looking rather put off at the fact he was made to look like a fool.

Outside of school, Hermione and Harry waited, leaning against the fence. Antonio said he was going to pick both of them up, but he was running a few minutes. Harry suspected it was because of some kind of mob related business; through he couldn't let Hermione know that.

"Harry," said a voice from behind Harry and Harry turned around, to see a dark haired girl that was perhaps only an inch or two shorter than Harry.

"Yes," replied Harry calmly.

"I need to speak with you," replied the girl coolly before adding in an undertone so Hermione couldn't hear. "I know you're the Boy-Who-Lived."

Harry's eyes widened, before looking at Hermione.

"Harry, what's going on?" asked Hermione.

"Nothing horrible, I just want to talk to Harry in private, alone," declared the girl, looking at Hermione.

"Is that okay, Hermione?" asked Harry.

"Fine," remarked Hermione, but there was a distrusting look on her face at the girl as Harry walked off with her.

"So, you know exactly who I am but yet I don't know who you are," said Harry casually.

"You will soon," replied the girl. "I must say, I'm surprised to see you of all people showing up at a Muggle school."

"Why wouldn't I?" asked Harry.

"I would think that Dumbledore would have in on a castle in some warded island teaching you in every type of magic imaginable," said the girl.

"Dumbledore, prepare me," said Harry, before breaking out into laughter. "Sorry, but that's funny. He just dropped me at my Muggle relatives, who hate me, and decided to forget about me."

"Really?" declared the girl with an interested expression but Hermione had walked over to him and stepped in front of him.

"Harry, Uncle Antonio's here," declared Hermione stepping in front of Harry.

"Well I guess I've got to go..." started Harry before trailing off and looking at the girl. "I'm sorry but could you please tell me your name?"

"Blaise," declared the girl crisply, who seemed to survey Hermione with a bit of distaste. Hermione wore an equally distasteful expression on her face "I hope that we can talk further on this some other time."

"Okay, see you around then, I guess," declared Harry as he turned around to see Hermione's look.

"Harry, I don't trust her," muttered Hermione. "You know whose daughter she is, don't you?"

"No, she never told me her last name," replied Harry in a confused voice.

"Her name last name's Zabini" declared Hermione causing Harry to stop in his tracks. "As in Boss Zabini."

"You know, don't you?" asked Harry and obviously he didn't need to elaborate his statement.

"Oh Harry, of course I know," replied Hermione shaking her head. "My mother and Uncle Antonio think I'm ignorant of the family business, but honestly, I've overheard enough to piece together everything. I might be almost seven years old but I'm not dumb."

"I should have known you would have figured it out sooner than later," declared Harry.

"I didn't want to tell you, Harry, but I had to when she talked to you," replied Hermione. "Her father must have put her up to it."

"Actually she didn't mention business one time," muttered Harry. "I doubt Boss Zabini knows I'm his rival and I'd prefer to keep it that way."

"Alright Harry, but be careful, I don't want to see anything happen to my best friend," said Hermione fretfully as several pebbles levitated up into the air before dropping down causing Harry to stop in his tracks.

"Hermione, have you noticed that odd things have been happening around you?" asked Harry.

"You mean like what those pebbles just did," said Hermione with a frown. "I remember when I was four, a window shattered when I got upset at my Mum and Dad. I had trouble finding one of my favorite books one time and I wished I could have it. It fell out of the shelf into my hand once I had thought hard that I wanted it."

“Anything else?” asked Harry.

“I sent Evelyn flying into a wall one time when I was having a bad day, but I could have sworn I didn’t touch her, but it happened” recalled Hermione, with a bit of a fond smile. “I was led inside to the Headmistress’s office, but I saw a bunch of guys in funny robes with sticks tend to her.”

Harry had known what Hermione was but he didn’t want her to put the pieces together too soon.

“Hermione, I know why these things are happening,” said Harry and Hermione looked up, prompting Harry to continue. Harry looked around to make sure no one was in hearing distance. “Hermione, you’re a witch.”

“I’m a what?” asked Hermione.

“A witch, you can do magic,” replied Harry.

“So that’s how you managed to pull off that prank,” said Hermione in understanding, with Harry feeling grateful that she had taken everything well. “Do you think you can teach me that?”

“Hermione, I could, but that’s very advanced magic,” said Harry.

“There’s still something else you aren’t telling me, Harry,” accused Hermione. “You seem to know way too much for a six year old.”

“Hermione, I wish I can tell you everything,” said Harry fretfully . “It’s not that I don’t trust you, it’s just that it will be dangerous for you to know.”

“Harry there has to be some way that you can tell me and not put me in danger,” said Hermione.

“There is a way,” replied Harry, as he looked deep in thought. “I’ll have to teach you Occlumency before I can tell you.”

“What’s that?” asked Hermione curiously.

"It protects your mind from other people reading it," explained Harry slowly. "It's very difficult to learn."

"Harry, I can do it, if you teach me," prompted Hermione who took the difficult magic as a personal challenge.

"Okay, we'll start as soon as possible and then once I feel you learn it, I'll tell you everything Hermione," said Harry. "Keep in mind. It might take years for you to master it."

"I don't care Harry," replied Hermione who looked bound and determined to learn everything about her mysterious friend. If there was one thing that frustrated Hermione, it was mysteries.

At Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Albus Dumbledore sat at his desk. The Headmaster was having one of the worst months of his life. Harry Potter had escaped the safety of his relatives, before being kidnapped by mobsters. Said mobsters also had abducted Remus Lupin and Harry's misguided declaration that Number Four Privet Drive wasn't his home had caused the security around the property to break. Aurors had made fast work of the Dursleys and Petunia was currently in a high security cell in Azkaban, no doubt ready to testify against Dumbledore. For the first time in his life, Dumbledore didn't have all the answers in his life. It would take a miracle to talk his way out of trouble on the Wizengamot hearing, which had been scheduled for October 20th, just a bit over a month from now.

A loud knock echoed outside Dumbledore's office door.

"Enter," declared the Headmaster calmly and the door opened, revealing the grizzled form of Mad-Eye Moody. "Hello, Alastor, thanks for coming on such short notice."

"Dumbledore," growled Moody, as limped over on his wooden leg before sitting down across from Dumbledore.

"Lemon drop, Alastor," offered Dumbledore.

“Albus, cut to the chase, you wanted me here on such short notice, you said it was urgent,” growled Moody. “So why don’t we skip the pleasantries and tell me what you want today.”

“Ah, yes, Alastor, blunt as always,” responded Dumbledore with a twinkle in his eye. “Your talents have tracked down many Death Eaters, bringing them to justice, but I require your talents for a bit of a different mission.”

Moody just sat there, waiting for Dumbledore to continue.

“I’m sure you heard that young Harry Potter has gone missing,” continued Dumbledore. “Alastor, for the boy’s safety, it’s imperative that you find him.”

“So, you want me to find Harry Potter,” said Moody, his magical eye whizzing in every direction. “Wouldn’t my time be better spent tracking down the Death Eaters who broke out of Azkaban?”

“Alastor, the boy’s safety is important, he needs to be found immediately,” replied Dumbledore.

“Dumbledore, I hope for your sake you don’t have another crackpot scheme with the boy like when you sent him to his Muggle relations,” growled Moody. “I saw the reports about what the Aurors found there...”

“Alastor he must be found and then we can work on getting Petunia Dursley out of Azkaban to reestablish Harry’s protections at another location,” prompted Dumbledore. “You do owe me a favor Alastor.”

“Dumbledore, I refuse to be a part of this circus,” growled Moody. “I don’t feel right hunting down a six year old like he’s some common Death Eater and the fact you seem to be planning breaking the same Muggle out of jail that was partly responsible for the kid’s treatment in the first place. Lily and James Potter would be ashamed at the game you are playing with their son.”

“I’m sorry you feel that way Alastor,” said Dumbledore sadly. “There are undesirable elements out there that would do the boy harm.”

Moody nodded gruffly as he left the office. Dumbledore was hoping that Moody could see the truth but it was not to be. The Headmaster waited until Moody had left the office. He sighed, he hoped he wouldn't have to resort to this but he needed to enlist the help of the one person that would have no problem of taking Harry and bringing him to Dumbledore by any means necessary.

Dumbledore walked over to the fireplace in his office, before throwing a handful of Floo powder into the fire.

"Severus, please report to my office," declared Dumbledore in a resigned voice.

Chapter Eleven: Desperate Times

Severus Snape shuddered slightly as he moved down a tunnel just underneath Hogsmeade. In spite of his fondness for the darkness, even Snape felt that there was a slightly inhumane quality to this place. The Dark Lord had insisted that this would be the perfect meeting place, as no one would ever guess Death Eaters meeting practically under the nose of Albus Dumbledore. The plan was essentially foolproof and Snape did favor it, because it allowed him to slip away from Hogwarts and slip back without Dumbledore becoming too suspicious.

Snape raised his hand and knocked three times on a moldy looking wooden door. An eerie silence followed, before the door swung open.

"Enter," hissed the voice of the Dark Lord himself and Snape walked in without further ado, as the hooded form of the Dark Lord looked up. "Ah, Severus, do sit down and make yourself at home."

The Dark Lord waved his wand, conjuring a wooden chair, allowing Snape to move forward and sit down.

"My Lord, Dumbledore has requested that I track down and bring Harry Potter to him," declared Snape, without preamble which caused Voldemort to look up with interest.

"Very interesting," declared Voldemort thoughtfully. "Dumbledore chose you, despite the animosity you have had for the boy's father. Extremely peculiar behavior for Dumbledore, even when considering his eccentricities."

"Alastor Moody refused to hunt down the boy, suggesting that his time would be better spent hunting down Death Eaters that escaped Azkaban," declared Snape, which caused Voldemort to give a high, cold, laugh, looking quite amused.

"Dumbledore seems to be losing his hold on his subordinates, perfect," declared Voldemort. "There is the matter of the Potter boy, Severus. Make Dumbledore believe you are hunting down Potter to bring to him, but once you find him, bring him directly to me."

"To kill him, my Lord," suggested Snape in a hopeful voice.

"No, Severus," declared Voldemort shortly.

"Might I ask, why, my Lord?" asked Snape, in a perplexed voice.
"This boy caused you to nearly die..."

"No, Severus, Harry Potter had little to nothing to do with my fall," hissed Voldemort. "It was more of a miscalculation on my part. I should not have attempted to murder the boy, but in hindsight, how was I to know my unblockable Killing Curse would rebound on me?"

Voldemort sat there in silence.

"I should have murdered Lily and James Potter, yes, they defied me one too many times and I allowed their actions to taint any logic I had regarding Harry Potter, a simple mistake, but one I shall not repeat every again," continued Voldemort. "I should have taken the boy, attempted to see what kind of potential he had. If he had the great power that the prophecy hinted, I could have made him a killer, an assassin, living only for the purpose to serve and kill for Lord Voldemort."

"So a mere tool," added Snape curtly. "Ironical, as Dumbledore seems to want the same thing of the boy, but does it under the guise of the so called greater good."

"Precisely, but at least I am more straight forward with my aims and don't hide beneath a mask of benevolence," declared Voldemort. "Dumbledore believes he is doing what's best for the boy, but once I have the boy, I will do what's best for our goal of the purification of the Magical World. Once Harry Potter has outlived his usefulness to me..."

Snape had no need for Voldemort to finish that statement. Potter would be used as a tool as long as the Dark Lord saw fit and then would be tossed to the side like a piece of rubbish once the Dark Lord felt he outlived his usefulness.

“Of course, I am getting ahead of myself,” declared Voldemort, more to himself than Snape, before turning his full attention to Snape. “Snape, you must find Potter, and then I can mold him.”

“And what of the mobsters that have been rumored to have kidnapped Potter?” prompted Snape.

“If they get in your way, kill them,” replied Voldemort coldly before deciding to touch upon something else he wanted a report from Snape of. “Now, Severus, your report on your trip to the Flamel residence.”

“The defenses seemed weaker than one would expect at first sight, my Lord,” declared Snape quickly. “My scan of the premises was sadly interrupted when I was engaged into battle by a visitor of Flamel’s. I had to flee to seek medical attention once my hand was injured by a firearm attack.”

“Snape, no excuses, I require information from Flamel’s library,” hissed Voldemort in a dangerous voice. “While the Philosopher’s Stone is safely inside of Gringotts, entering there under the guise of trying to steal it was the perfect plan, a plan that did not work to perfection thanks to you crumpling at the sight of a little blood.”

Snape decided it would be best not to inform the Dark Lord that he came close to losing his wand hand at the hands of that psychopath’s attack but decided to press on with something that he had been going over in his mind since the incident.

“He seemed to know me...” declared Snape before trailing off, realizing. “It was Black, he just escaped Azkaban, it makes perfect sense, and now he’s out to kill me in some twisted vengeance. My attacker might have been disguised but only two people have called me that disgusting name and one of them is dead.”

“Now, Severus, don’t jump to conclusions,” hissed Voldemort. “And don’t forget yourself. Seeking out Sirius Black is not what I requested you to do for your mission. Your mission is to bring Harry Potter to me, regardless of the methods.”

“Of course, my Lord,” declared Snape in a strained voice, getting to his feet and bowing towards the Dark Lord. “Will that be all you require of me, my Lord?”

“Yes, Severus, you’re excused,” hissed Voldemort and Snape wasted little time leaving. Both Dumbledore and Voldemort were putting pressure on him to find Potter. Hunting down a six year old brat was the last thing that Snape wanted to spend his weekend doing and that included marking the abominations that passed for the first year Gryffindor Potions essays.

Voldemort sat leaning back. Using Wormtail’s body had definite drawbacks. He suffered magical fatigue at a higher rate than he would have normally and he had strong urges to eat a lot of cheese. Voldemort hoped he could still get into Flamel’s residence, as he counted on a particular piece of knowledge found in the library as the final component to his new body. The other elements that Voldemort required for the ritual would work on their own, but Voldemort wanted that extra bit just as a precaution. As he found out when he tried and killed Harry Potter, nothing was fool proof. The more anchors towards immortality, the better, as far as Voldemort was concerned. Death would be cheated no matter what and Voldemort would achieve his aims.

Outside of a rundown flat in one of the worst parts of London late Friday evening, Harry checked out his magically induced disguise in the mirror of the limo. He was just over five feet tall. His eyes were black as the night sky, showing absolutely no compassion and intimidating to all that looked into them. His hair was grey, with the hints of balding, with small scars on his face. His right hand was covered in scar tissue. The final piece of the puzzle was Lucius Malfoy’s pimp cane.

“So, gentlemen, what do you think?” asked Harry.

“Perfect Boss Potter,” declared one of Harry’s mobsters, a tall man by the name of Stevens. “That hocus pocus works wonders, no one would expect you to be a six year old.”

“I quite agree,” declared Antonio. “Now, Boss Potter, I must warn you that this guy has been trying to evade us in paying his dues to us.”

Your grandfather loaned him some money twenty years ago and he's been moving around to give us the slip, but we finally caught up to him."

"So, he'll pay us, or he'll pay the price," declared Harry, nodding in agreement, as they exited the limo, walking towards the door. Harry and Antonio lead the way, with another five mobsters tailing behind them.

Antonio raised his hand, knocking on the door of the flat. Harry picked up a quick flurry of movement inside.

"Alright, Semple, open up, we know you're in there," declared Antonio in a forceful voice. "The new boss wants to have a few words with you."

"Allow me," declared Harry, with a twisted smirk, before pulling out his wand. "Alohomora!"

The door opened and a pathetic middle aged man cowered as Harry lead his mobsters inside.

"Ah, Semple, let me introduce you to the new boss, Boss Potter," declared Antonio.

"Good evening, Mr. Semple," declared Harry in a raspy voice. "It has come to my attention that my grandfather did you a favor many years ago and you didn't repay that favor back."

"Wait a minute, you're Herb Evans's grandson," declared Semple. "Your grandfather would have understood, Boss Potter, he wouldn't have come and hunted me down like a rapid..."

"Silence," rasped Harry. "What my grandfather would or wouldn't have done isn't the case right now? The fact remains you owe us big and you will pay everything you owe us."

"I don't have anything," declared Semple in a simpering voice. "I took the money that Boss Evans promptly gave me and gambled it. I lost every pound, you got to believe me."

"You lying scumbag!" yelled Antonio, who back handed Semple. "We could have used that money for something more productive, but you lied. You told us you were going to open a restaurant and we would get a substantial cut from your profits. Yet, you piss all the money away for your gambling addiction, even through you swore to Boss Evans you wouldn't."

"Is this true, Semple?" declared Harry in a cold voice, as he leaned on the pimp cane. "You played my grandfather for a fool and took his money, for a gambling addiction."

"I couldn't help myself," begged Semple. "Please, I'll do anything to make up the money; you know I'm good for it."

"Unless you hand over everything you owe right now, you're not good for nothing," declared Harry swiftly, his raspy voice broke.

"Boss Potter raises an excellent point," declared one of the mobsters. "Do you have any money?"

Semple looked up.

"Please, I need more time," begged Semple. "Just a few more days, and I'll have it all, every bit of it."

"Time is no longer a luxury you have, Semple," said Harry coldly. "You had twenty years, your time is up."

Harry put a silencing charm around the perimeter of the flat, before he snapped his fingers, before stepping back and the mobsters pointed their machine guns at Semple, who threw his hands over his face instinctively. A motion that did him no good, as he was promptly killed by a rapid fire of gunfire. Semple flopped to the ground, completely motionless.

"Not nice, not pleasant," muttered Harry bowing his head with a moment of silence. "Yet given the circumstances, an absolute necessity."

"You had no choice, Boss Potter," declared Antonio. "There was no way he could have paid us back so it was best to cut our losses."

“Well, I suppose we better get to the most unpleasant part, cleaning up,” declared Harry, which caused a light round of chuckles. “I don’t know who might care about this guy, but it’s better to be safe than sorry.”

Outside of the flat, two shady looking men exited a limo that pulled up behind the limo that Harry and his employees had entered. They walked around, examining the vehicle rather closely.

“This is the vehicle, Frankie,” muttered one of the men.

“Looks like it to me, Vito,” declared the mobster known as Frankie, cracking his knuckles, before pulling out a gun. “Should we off them when they come out?”

“No, Boss Zabini doesn’t want them dead yet,” replied Vito, as he pulled out a knife. “He wants his new rival to be sent a message, a message in respect. Boss Zabini ain’t taking too kindly to his meddling, but since he’s new, he is willing to give the new guy a bit of a warning.”

“This guy’s been taking the boss’s turf over bit by bit,” declared Frankie in an incredulous voice. “There are two things that the boss doesn’t like. People taking over his turf and people who spell his last name wrong.”

“Yeah he had a guy whacked for misspelling his last name last night, doesn’t take too kindly to that,” said Vito with a bit of a chuckle, before straightening up. “But fatherhood has caused the boss to go soft, but as long as he still pays us, I ain’t complaining too much.”

“Let’s get down to business before they both come back,” declared Frankie, before pulling out a brick as his partner in crime pulled out a knife, before going to work.

Inside the flat, Harry finished waving his wand as the other mobsters hung back, watching their boss do all the work. The residence was eliminated with any residue that could link Harry or anyone else in his organization to anything that had happened in that flat.

“There, that should cover it,” declared Harry.

“Everything does run a lot smoother with a wizard running the operation,” declared Antonio as the others nodded and Harry looked flushed, before shaking his head.

“Just having a bit of trouble holding my disguise, must have overextended myself,” muttered Harry to himself, answering unasked questions. “Does get easier every time, but still an insane amount of mental concentration for a...”

A sound of shattering glass echoed outside from outside, causing Harry to jerk his head up and his mobsters look around frantically. A few seconds later, a sound tires squealing away from the scene. Harry motioned for the others to follow him outside. The door flew open without any effort by Harry, allowing everyone to exit the flat.

The limo had all four tires slashed, and the windshield had a brick put through it. One of the mobsters peaked through the windshield and spotted something.

“Look boss, there is a note attached to that brick,” declared the mobster and Harry rushed over, yanking the driver side door open. Harry removed the note from the brick.

“Stop trying to move in on my turf,” read Harry. “Or you will find yourself sleeping in stream somewhere with the fishes. Sincerely, Boss Zabini.”

Harry looked bemused, before shaking his head.

“Yes, Zabini, I knew you wouldn’t be too happy about my meddling, but do you think I’m going to stop on the account of you?” asked Harry, to no one in particular. “Still, I can’t believe he would pull something like this.”

“The damage to the limo, yeah I know,” said Antonio but Harry waved it off.

“I can fix that in a few minutes, it’s the matter that he threatened me,” declared Harry. “He obviously didn’t think too hard before childishly lashing out against me. It’s almost like he wasn’t expecting me to retaliate.”

“So what should we do next?” asked Antonio.

“Wait for a few days, lay low, and then I’ll spit in the face of Zabini’s threats,” answered Harry. “He’s not going to intimidate Boss Harry Potter that easily.”

With a quick bit of work, Harry waved his wand, fixing the tires and the windshield before moving into the limo and off into the night.

In the Leaky Cauldron, Narcissa Black sank down on her bed, tired from another day’s work, cursing her former husband’s inept actions regarding the matter of adopting Harry Potter. Lucius had received incompetent legal counseling from his representation and paid for it by breaking a clause in the contract that caused the Malfoy family fortune to be handed right over to Harry Potter. From what Narcissa was able to find out before she was thrown out of Gringotts, the contract was legal as far as the goblins were concerned and the creatures did get a hefty percentage in transference fees, so it wasn’t like they were going to cooperate with any humans other than Harry Potter.

Still, Lucius’s blundering tied directly into his inability to read a contract properly gave Narcissa a perfect reason to petition to the Wizengamot to get their marriage annulled. Narcissa did not want her name to be tied to his and indeed wanted to maintain some form of respect, despite losing everything, except her son. It had been coming for a long time, but Narcissa was willing to be blind to Lucius’s faults like her finding him in bed with other men, because of the heavy fortune tied to the Malfoy family name. Now, Narcissa felt herself free from Lucius and felt it would be better off for Draco, to not have his contaminating influence.

Narcissa did blame one other person for her current knutless status, other than Lucius. Albus Dumbledore was to blame for not bothering to educate Harry Potter in proper Wizarding traditions and etiquette. Otherwise, the boy would not have freed the house elf and Lucius would not have attacked Potter to break the contract. If she had the chance, Narcissa wanted to find a way to make Dumbledore pay. Maybe if she ever got in contact with Bella, who had escaped from Azkaban, she could be persuaded to do the deed. Narcissa doubted

that her sister wouldn't care how powerful, due to the rumors of her insanity that had reached her, caused by overexposure to the Dementors of Azkaban.

Early Saturday Morning, in the depths of Knockturn Alley, Severus Snape crept cautiously down the alley towards his destination, his hood over his face. Even with someone with the abilities of Snape, going down Knockturn Alley was always a risky proposition. It was a breeding ground to dark creatures. There were rumors that a group of Dementors outside of the control of the Ministry lurked towards the very end of Knockturn Alley, but no one had ever ventured that far to find out. Snape held his wand out at all times, before looking up and reaching his destination. Snape pushed open the door, still with his wand out, and walked into the dark, dusty, cobweb filled shop. There were several artifacts hanging from the shop, that not even Snape had the foggiest idea what they might be.

Snape walked up to the dusty desk and from a curtain behind the desk appeared a hunch backed, toothless old woman that was at least one hundred and twenty years ago. Smoke flew from the room where she had appeared and she looked Snape in the eyes.

"Sevvy dear, welcome," declared the woman as Snape winced at that particular name. In normal instances, he would have cursed the person into oblivion, but he needed some assistance. "It has been too long, hasn't it, darling?"

"Olga, I require your assistance..." replied Snape but the old woman, Olga, cut him off.

"Let me guess, you want an elixir to improve your looks," said Olga. "Sorry deary, but I don't do miracles, but perhaps you would like to look into a brand new revolutionary Muggle product to improve your hair and make it less greasy. I believe it is called shampoo."

"No, I require something that will be able to block the fire from Muggle firearms," responded Snape coolly. "Do you have anything of that nature, perhaps in the form of a Potion or maybe body armor?"

"I think I might be able to get something for you like that within the next two weeks or so," said Olga thoughtfully and Snape reached into

his pocket, before throwing a few galleons on the desk. "Did I say two weeks? I meant two minutes."

Olga disappeared into the back room, as Snape waited patiently for her to reappear. Moments later she appeared with what appeared to be ugly looking body armor. She placed it in front of Snape.

"What precisely is this abomination?" asked Snape calmly.

"My finest acquisition," declared Olga, before launching into an explanation. "It is dragon hide from a Hungarian Horntail, concentrated with the blood of a giant. It will make whoever wears it immune to the majority of all attacks, both magical and Muggle. The only thing that it cannot block is the Killing Curse."

"Give it to me," responded Snape, reaching for the armor but Olga had pulled it out of his grasp.

"Now, now, Sevvv, I can't just give such a potent magical artifact away, that wouldn't be good for business, now would it. Not to mention, it can become transparent and give you the element of surprise once you put it on. A value of one thousand galleons," lectured Olga. "However, for you, darling, I will offer it for a mere five hundred galleons."

"I teach Potions at Hogwarts, Olga," declared Snape in a forced patient voice. "I'm lucky to make five hundred galleons in a year."

"Oh, I do forget, how about three hundred and fifty galleons?" asked Olga. "Only because you are such a valued customer."

"How about I pay ten galleons and I don't tip off to the Ministry that you are breeding dangerous magical creatures in that back room?" suggested Snape. "Should be about upwards to thirty years in Azkaban?"

"Fifty galleons, that's my final offer, Severus," declared Olga in a forced voice, realizing she was practically giving the armor away but Snape seemed to excel in blackmail.

Snape shove the galleons into Olga's hand, realizing that this transaction pretty much had cost him almost three months salary at Hogwarts, but it would be worth it once he got his hands on Harry Potter and presented him to the Dark Lord. Olga handed Snape the body armor and Snape slowly backed out of the show. He wouldn't put it past that old hag to curse him while his back was turned and modify his memory, so she kept both the money and the armor.

Outside of Gringotts, Harry, Antonio, Remus, and Hermione had arrived outside of the magical bank, being followed at a safe distance by a couple of armed bodyguards. Harry had been sent a letter, requesting his presence immediately. Hermione was coming along because she insisted Harry show her around Diagon Alley. She was rather intrigued about the Magical World, and asked Harry nonstop questions about it since she had found out she was a witch. Harry felt that the best thing to do anyway was to pick up a few books, to help Hermione understand the basic magical theory before he started slowly teaching her Occlumency. And then, Harry could tell her everything, something that Harry was in two minds about. One, he would feel better about not shielding the truth from Hermione, but at the same time Harry could only begin to guess her reaction. Harry suspected that Hermione might piece it all together on her own sooner or later, but not say anything, waiting for Harry to tell her, so she could confirm her suspicions. Exactly how she would react, Harry could only begin to guess.

Harry decided the best thing would be to take this one step at a time and cross that particular bridge when he got to it. It would not be all that healthy if he dwelled on what might happen, what could happened, Harry tried to mostly concern himself with what was happening at the moment and what he needed to do to prevent the future that he had come from.

"I do wonder why Gringotts called you here so urgently, Harry," muttered Remus.

"That makes two of us, but they did tell me this was important," declared Harry. "Maybe some long lost relative croaked and I inherited their money. I can't really think of anything else, but we'll find out in a few minutes."

They walked into Gringotts, with Hermione looking around with a wide eyed expression on her face, as she took in the surroundings of the magical bank and she stepped back.

“What are those things?” whispered Hermione in a bit of a fearful voice.

“Goblins,” replied Harry calmly. “Guardians of the gold and other assorted treasures in this bank. Don’t worry through if they are a little surly. They don’t like anyone, but they won’t hurt you unless you try and steal from their bank.”

“Why would anyone want to steal from them?” asked Hermione incredulously.

“Severe head trauma,” suggested Antonio from behind them causing Harry and Hermione to snicker, before muttering to Harry. “Even with a gun, I don’t think I want to face these things down. They would look like they would take the gun and shove it straight up my...”

“May I help you?” asked the goblin known as Fondlemember before looking at Hermione, who was covering her eyes with her hands. “No need to be frightened child, we only dine on small children on Wednesdays.”

Harry didn’t know whether or not that was a joke. On second thought, he really did not want to know.

“You sent me a letter a few hours ago, wanting to see me in an urgent matter,” declared Harry calmly.

“Ah yes, young Mr. Potter,” remarked Fondlemember. “It seems you have found yourself in the middle of quite the unique situation in regards your inheritance. If you would follow me, I shall inform you of the matter away from prying eyes or ears for that matter.”

Remus looked at Harry but Harry nodded his head, indicating that he would be fine. Fondlemember lead Harry down a corridor, to an office, where the office door slammed shut once Harry had entered the office. Fondlemember motioned for Harry to sit down in the empty chair, before pulling a folder out and throwing it on the desk.

“I’ll be blunt, Mr. Potter, even the goblins know that the Ministry of Magic has been pouring in resources to try and track you down,” declared Fondlemember. “We goblins rarely take notice to the affairs of wizards, but once matters of gold are involved, that is an entirely different story and we decided to look closely at one Albus Dumbledore.”

Fondlemember looked at Harry, who seemed to be a bit confused, so the goblin decided to elaborate.

“Your parents stipulated in their will that Dumbledore was to receive five hundred galleons a month to be used for the Order of the Phoenix organization,” declared Fondlemember. “All three existing copies of the will, the one on file at Gringotts, the one on file at the Wizengamot, and the one on file at the Department of Mysteries all say this and we believe Dumbledore has not found a way to alter the wills. But, there was a catch in the will that Dumbledore choose to disregard.”

“And what was that catch, Fondlemember?” asked Harry.

“Dumbledore was to make sure you were sent to a suitable home,” declared Fondlemember. “There were no other stipulations other than that. Needless to say, being send to Vernon and Petunia Dursley was not your parents’ idea of a suitable home.”

“So Dumbledore violated that issue,” declared Harry. “There’s more, isn’t there?”

“Precisely, your parents also issued two hundred galleons to the person or persons who would be taking you in, so they would not have to spend one knut on you,” said Fondlemember which caused Harry to slam his hands down on the desk.

“They pocketed my money and they still treated me like dirt,” declared Harry.

“We have records of account transactions from Gringotts to the Muggle bank account of the Dursleys that you might find of use in the future,” declared Fondlemember. “Needless to say, Dumbledore was very shrewd in this manner, as it is our belief that he may have

convinced himself that you were being sent to a suitable home. However, while Dumbledore might convince the Ministry of Magic that he wasn't violating the terms of the will, signing this document will cause Gringotts to take the proper precautions."

"And what are these proper precautions?" asked Harry.

"Forty Two Thousand Galleons will find its way from Dumbledore's vault to yours, as the goblin nation feels that will be the best way to teach him a lesson and thus have him pay back the funds he receive in error," declared Fondlemember, who looked pleased at how much the transference fees would be. "We at Gringotts frown upon fraud and since the Dumbledore family vault only has a balance of twenty three thousand, five hundred, and twenty nine galleons, three sickles, and four knuts...well let us just say that Mr. Dumbledore might have to get another job in addition to his other duties to make up the difference."

Harry nodded, Dumbledore might have not intentionally been stealing from him, but Harry felt that forty two thousand galleons somewhat compensated for being forced to live with the Dursleys during the other lifetime.

"Where do I sign?" asked Harry in a calm voice and Fondlemember pushed a piece of parchment in front of him.

"Sign here, here, and initial here," declared Fondlemember and Harry did as he was told. "There, all of Dumbledore's money is being transferred to the Potter vault and the repo goblins have been sent out to confiscate his property to auction it off. That should be good for a few more thousand galleons, but I daresay Dumbledore will need to find a way to make up the difference rather quick."

Fondlemember looked at Harry.

"One more small item of value," declared Fondlemember. "You were to inherit an Invisibility Cloak that was a Potter family heirloom. That item has been lost, but there is belief that Dumbledore has it in his possession. If our repo goblins manage to track it down, we will return it to your vault and inform you of such."

"Is that all?" asked Harry.

"Yes, Mr. Potter, you are excused," said Fondlemember in a dismissive voice and Harry took it as his cue to leave.

Hermione seemed to be in awe every place they visited in Diagon Alley. She even seemed mildly impressed by Quality Quidditch Supplies, but naturally the one thing Hermione was looking forward to was getting inside Flourish and Blotts.

"It's the place to get the latest books about the Magical World, Hermione," explained Harry as they enter the store. "Sadly, there are a few bits and pieces of rubbish, mostly written by Gilderoy Lockhart and Rita Skeeter, but the rest are written by the best and the brightest in their fields."

Hermione nodded, as she looked at the shelves and shelves of books.

"The only place that has more books in the Magical World is the Hogwarts library," responded Harry.

"Naturally, most of the really useful ones are in the restricted section," added Remus. "You need permission from a teacher, which can be hard to get. James and Sirius were always good at making up excuses to get a pass to the restricted section."

"Where do we start through Harry?" asked Hermione.

"The beginning is always a nice place," answered Harry. "You'd want a book that introduces the basic theory of magic, before you actually learn any spell work. I think we should also get a book about the basics of mental magic, because it will help when you learn Occlumency."

"Sounds like a good idea, Harry," said Antonio, before looking around. "Seems to be no one here, except for that man with greasy hair and hooked nose...."

Harry looked up, and saw a very unfortunate addition that had just walked in. He quickly threw his hood up, obscuring his face, wishing that he had thought to take some of his disguise potion this morning.

"Snape," hissed Remus and Harry in unison, which caused Hermione to look at both of them with a confused look but Snape's curiosity, seemed to be caught by their words and he walked over, recognizing Remus immediately.

"Good morning, Lupin, I was under the impression that you had been kidnapped by the mob," declared Snape calmly, before looking at the hooded figure and seeing a very familiar looking pair of green eyes and realizing immediately. "Potter."

"Uh, excuse me," declared Harry, feigning child like innocent but Snape grabbed Harry roughly by the shoulders, before throwing his hood back.

"Don't play games with me, Potter!" demanded Snape in a forceful voice. "You can't be arrogant enough to think I would fall for your act, well you are coming with me or..."

"Let him go, Snape," warned Lupin, as he pulled his wand out, but Snape looked at Lupin.

"Perhaps, you and Black were really in on this together, taking the brat, along with the mob," declared Snape calmly, as Hermione looked fearful but Antonio quickly led his niece away from the scene "Lupin, Dumbledore will be very interested to see that you are gallivanting around with a wanted criminal. Then again, I would expect nothing less from a dark creature."

Harry waved his hand as his bodyguards peered inside the window, before they aimed their guns right at Snape's back. A barrage of bullets shot towards Snape, which caused him to drop Harry and Harry to duck behind the book shelves, so he could get out his wand.

"Fools, I was ready for your firearm assault," declared Snape coldly, before pointing his wand at the bodyguards who nodded.

"This guy must have some kind of body armor on underneath his clothing," declared one of the bodyguards.

"I guess we're going to take him out the old fashion way," grunted the other bodyguard, as they moved in, surrounding Snape from either side, but Snape was ready.

"AVADA KEDVARA!" yelled Snape, striking one of the bodyguards in the chest, causing him to crumple to the ground, dead.

The other bodyguard raised his arms, attempting to cave Snape's head in but Snape slashed his wand towards the chest of the bodyguard. The bodyguard dropped to his knees, winded before Snape moved in for the kill.

"Avada Kedavra!" declared Snape calmly and the other bodyguard dropped dead.

In a flash Lupin sent a stunner towards Snape but Snape calmly deflected it.

"Pathetic, Lupin," declared Snape as he avoided a full body bind. "The fact you were third in our year in Defense against the Dark Arts is quite laughable but perhaps I should give you a free lesson."

Snape conjured a net from his wand, before blasting it towards Remus. Remus was not quick enough, the net wrapping around him and trapping him, nearly crushing him. The werewolf was alive, but just barely, as it was difficult to breath in the close quarters Snape kept him.

Harry turned to face Snape.

"What do you want?" asked Harry, unable to keep the venom out of his tone.

"Come with me, Potter, and I'll let the others live," declared Snape in a threatening voice before pointing his wand towards Potter. "Imperio."

Harry felt the blank feeling that was common with the Imperius Curse wash over his mind.

“Follow me, Potter,” declared Snape and inside Harry’s body, an internal battle between his six year old self and his twenty six year old self were locked in a struggle. The six year old self seemed to be bending to Snape’s will and took a tentative step forward, but Harry’s older self deep within his subconscious was holding him back.

“No,” whispered Harry calmly as Snape.

“COME POTTER!” yelled Snape but Hermione apparently could take no more and rushed from Antonio’s grip.

“No Hermione come back, your mother will kill me if anything happens to you,” muttered Antonio desperately, but Hermione stamped on Snape’s foot.

“Leave Harry alone!” yelled Hermione in a forceful voice, which managed to break Snape’s concentration slightly, enough for Harry to be able to shake off the effects of the curse.

Snape calmly shoved Hermione to the ground and Antonio looked to make a move, but Snape raised his wand and Harry rushed to the side as fast as his six year old legs could carry him.

“Avada Kedavra!” declared Snape, as Hermione looked confused as the jet of green light come at her, but at the last minute, Harry rushed over, pulling Hermione to the side, before it could hit her. Harry could feel the Killing Curse missing the back of his own hair by inches and it impacting into the book shelf, catching it on fire.

Harry looked up at Snape with pure venom in his green eyes, as Hermione was shaking right next to him, petrified out of her mind. Severus Snape had sunk to a new low, firing a killing curse at a seven year old child. Snape stared back, surveying the child with curiosity, as Harry hoped that one of his latest discoveries before he was knocked back in time would be enough to beat Snape. If he could only goad Snape into trying to use Legilimency on him.

“Interesting Potter, you seemed to know what exactly that curse was, judging by your alarm when I aimed at your little friend here,” declared Snape. “Perhaps you would like to inform me as to why?”

“Eat dung!” declared Harry a childish tone.

“Very well Potter,” said Snape.

“You mean you are going to actually eat dung,” declared Harry curiously.

“No, Potter, there are other ways to find out the truth with weak minded individuals such as yourself,” declared Snape with a tone that indicated that he was struggling to remain calm and pointing his wand towards Harry’s head. “Legilimens.”

Snape attempted to force his way into the boy’s mind but found a surprising amount of resistance for a six year old. He was not going to give up that easy and Snape attempted to summon all of his willpower to force his way into the brat’s mind.

The next thing Snape knew, he felt an impact not unlike getting hit in the head with a blunt object. Snape dropped to the ground, knocked completely unconscious.

Harry walked over, freeing Remus from his trap, as Antonio walked over.

“Is he dead?” asked Antonio.

“Unfortunately not,” responded Harry. “He might have brain damage, but you kind of have to have a brain first.”

Harry looked at Hermione, who seemed to be at a loss for words, looking around, but taking a deep breath.

“Harry, who was that mean greasy man?” asked Hermione.

“Severus Snape, he works for Dumbledore,” explained Harry. “He also had worked for...”

Harry shook his head stopping himself. He had yet to tell Hermione about Voldemort yet and didn’t want to break that particular news bit yet.

“Anyway, I’m guessing Dumbledore wanted to get his hands on me, to no doubt convince me to testify for his behalf at the hearing,” declared Harry abruptly, as he looked at Snape, who had not shown any signs of movement.

“Are we quite sure he’s not dead?” asked Antonio.

“Yes I’m sure,” declared Harry before looking outside of Flourish and Blotts and resisting the urge to swear. “The Ministry is here, which is nearly as bad as Dumbledore because they will want me to discredit him so they can look better at retrospect and then use me like a mascot. Contrary to popular belief, I only like to do things that might have some type of benefit in it for me or at least people who won’t turn around to use me like a puppet. That being said, we need to get out of here, on the double.”

“The limo is a ways off, we’ll never take make it in time and past all those Ministry officials,” declared Antonio, as the four moved several rows back.

“Portkey, completely magical, slightly illegal, but a quick way to give the Ministry of Magic a slip,” declared Harry, as he picked up *“Year with the Yeti”* by Gilderoy Lockhart. “Ah yes, the perfect piece of rubbish to make our Portkey.”

Harry replaced the book with the two galleons it had cost, a rip-off as far as Harry was concerned. They should be paying him two galleons to take the book off their hands.

“Harry, that’s a brand new book,” whispered Hermione, who seemed to look scandalized at Harry calling a book rubbish.

“And soon, it will be a brand new paper weight,” replied Harry before adding in an undertone. “It’s by Gilderoy Lockhart, so absolutely nothing in that book is of value.”

“Who isn’t too bright, as Sirius and James replaced his wand with a piece of licorice at Hogwarts and he didn’t notice for a week,” replied Remus.

"Set that thing to go to Jonathan and Marie's, I need to drop off Hermione by noon," declared Antonio.

"Will do," said Harry but Hermione seemed to be surveying Harry with a rather curious and searching expression. "Yes Hermione."

"Harry, that looks like really advanced magic, something that a six year old shouldn't be able to do.." started Hermione.

"I'll tell you when you've mastered Occlumency, Hermione," declared Harry in an absent minded voice, as he finished the Portkey, which began to glow blue. Harry felt a little flushed, but managed to shake his head, clearing the mental cobwebs. "Okay, this thing will activate in one minute. Remus, you know what to do. Antonio, Hermione, put a finger on it."

Remus, Antonio, and Hermione did just that. Seconds before the Aurors would have just reached their hiding place, the Portkey transported them just outside the front door of Hermione's parents.

"Close shave, Harry," muttered Remus but Harry barely was able to look up to acknowledge Remus. Knocking back Snape's mental attack, activating the Portkey, and using his own magic to transport the Portkey had stretched Harry's body's ability to use magic to the limit.

"Harry, are you okay?" asked Hermione.

"Fine, Hermione," muttered Harry weakly, taking a couple of steps forward, before collapsing to the ground, from a severe case of magical exhaustion.

Chapter Twelve: End Game

For a young Auror, the scene of Flourish and Blotts was one that one Harper Quincy was not quite prepared for. Looking down, he spotted two bodies, dead from the distinctive signs from the Killing Curse. Having only joined the ranks of Aurors the year after He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named fell, Quincy saw little action. Granted there was the odd Death Eater that still lurked out there that the Ministry hadn't managed to track down following that fated Halloween Night.

"Definite signs of the Killing Curse," declared the voice of the young bald black Auror that had just entered the shop, having scoped the scene outside, before turning to the shopkeeper who looked rather petrified before proceeding in a reassuring voice. "Aurors Kingsley Shacklebolt and Harper Quincy, m'am, if you could just tell us what exactly happened here."

"That m-m-man right there came into my shop, getting into a confrontation with some of the customers," declared the shopkeeper, her voice shaking still, pointing at the crumpled form that Quincy had not noticed before. "It was two men and two children, a boy and a girl. That man on the floor attempted to attack the customers, but two other gentlemen entered the shop, but were quickly shot down by the Killing Curse. I called for help at that point but I did manage to overhear that man trying to put one of the children under the Imperius Curse."

Quincy stepped forward, at the sound of muffled voices that came from the back of the shop. Kingsley looked towards his partner, as he picked up the sound of the voices as well.

"Check it out, he might have accomplices" muttered Kingsley before adding. "While I check the wand for spells."

Quincy nodded, quickening his pace as Kingsley walked over. The supposed attacker was unconscious, but a faint pulse told Kingsley he was still alive. In the blink of an eye, the Auror picked up the wand, before checking it for spells.

“Two successful Killing Curses, an attempted Killing Curse, and an Imperius Curse,” muttered Kingsley as his partner walked back over. “Good for a long stint in Azkaban.”

“Whoever was back there, they got away now,” said Quincy as Kingsley nodded, before bending down.

“Help me search him for any emergency portkeys,” declared Kingsley and Kingsley nodded, before turning the prisoner over, to reveal that it was Severus Snape.

“Snape, that means...” started Quincy but Kingsley cut him off.

“It’s up to Crouch to find out what this means, our job is to check him for any portkeys and make sure he is properly secured before bringing him into the Ministry so he can be questioned,” replied Kingsley in a stern voice, as the two Aurors began to search Snape, following proper protocol. With Snape’s wand taken as evidence, the two Aurors secured the prisoner, before bringing him to the Ministry.

Around this time at Hogwarts, Dumbledore’s quiet in his office was interrupted when his younger brother Aberforth appeared out of his fire place, looking rather frantic and roughed up, not bothering to avoid dropping soot on the floor.

“Albus!” yelled Aberforth. “Repo-goblins just kicked me out of my bar, saying they are going to auction it off.”

“Repo-goblins?” asked Albus with a confused look.

“Yes, Albus, repo-goblins, the most vicious, blood thirsty goblins of them all,” continued Aberforth. “They kicked me out of my bar, my home, and what’s worse, they took all my goats!”

“Now calm down, Aberforth, I’m sure it is all a misunderstanding,” declared Albus.

At that minute, Dumbledore’s office door burst open and a smoking gargoyle head flew through the doorway, landing right at the foot of the Headmaster’s desk. In a flash, a dozen vicious looking goblins dressed in grey jumpsuits and wearing black facemasks, carrying

what appeared to be hairdryers. The repo-goblins began pointing these hair dryers towards several of the instruments in Dumbledore's office. All of the paintings had woken up, and were watching, some, like Phineas Nigellus Black, enjoying the show as both Dumbledores seemed to be helpless before Albus found his voice.

"Now wait a minute, you can't just barge into my office and take my possessions without a proper warrant," declared Albus in a feeble voice, which caused the goblins to glare at Albus.

"Oh yes, antagonizing any type of goblin, never mind the most vicious type of goblin, a real swell idea, Headmaster," declared Phineas in a snide voice. "Why don't you put your head into the mouth of a hungry dragon for an encore?"

"You seem to have us confused with your Ministry, human," declared one of the repo-goblins in a snide voice as the repo-goblins broke open Dumbledore's cabinet, revealing his pensieve.

"The pensieve, no, it contains some of my most private memories," declared Dumbledore desperately.

"Excellent than it should increase the value of this item by several galleons," said one of the repo-goblins wickedly, as they took the pensieve, which caused Dumbledore to rise to his feet, in a vain attempt to fight off these blood thirsty, money hungry, savages.

A snap of the fingers, caused Albus Dumbledore to fly upwards, hanging upside down on the ceiling. The repo-goblins laughed evilly at Dumbledore's predicament as his wand flew towards the ground, where one of the goblins caught it casually.

"Dumbledore's wand, should fetch about a few hundred galleons," declared one of more wicked repo-goblins, as she joined her fellow goblins in laughing at the plight of this human, as Aberforth Dumbledore wisely decided to stay mostly out of the way of the repo-goblins.

The repo-goblins continued to search Dumbledore's office, securing various possessions, before using their transporters to send his

possessions towards a chamber in Gringotts, to be auctioned off to the highest bidder.

“Everything’s been cleared out,” grunted one of the repo-goblins.

“No, not everything,” contributed another repo-goblin with a bit of a sinister grin appearing on its face, eying Dumbledore. “Nice outfit, Albus Dumbledore, should fetch maybe a good ten or so galleons.”

Albus Dumbledore’s eyes widened in horror, but that was about all the movement he was allowed to make, as the repo-goblins pointed their transporters towards Dumbledore, causing his robes and all of his other clothes to vanish into thin air, leaving Albus Dumbledore stuck to the ceiling in all of his glory, which caused several of the paintings of past headmasters and headmistresses to recoil in absolute horror and even the repo-goblins seemed to be horrified, which said a lot as goblins were among the most fearless of all magical creatures. Mercifully, one of the goblins conjured a burlap potato sack, causing it to wrap around Albus, preserving what little decency that the old man had left.

“According to our calculations, even with all your property seized and the Dumbledore family vault wiped clean, you still owe five hundred and seventeen galleons, three sickles, and a knut for your crimes,” declared one of the repo-goblins and Dumbledore looked baffled at the mention of these crimes. “If you fail to repay this money within ninety days, you will be sent to the goblin labor camps to work off your debts.”

Albus had heard the stories of the goblin labor camps. There was pretty much a consensus that most wizards would rather spend fifteen years in Azkaban than fifteen minutes in the goblin labor camps. The Headmaster didn’t know of anyone alive who had attended the camps, but even to someone who didn’t even have the slightest fear of death, the stories caused a great amount of intimidation.

“Exactly what crimes did my brother commit?” asked Aberforth. He wasn’t disputing that Albus had mucked up somewhere royally but since the fact he lost the Hog’s Head bar and his beloved goats, he

was extremely curious at exactly why the repo-goblins had seized everything with such a fury.

“Little reading material for you,” declared one of the repo-goblins in a rough voice, before the repo-goblins moved out of the office, with Albus still stuck to the ceiling.

“Aberforth, if you could please get me down?” asked Albus.

Aberforth shrugged his shoulders, before pulling out his wand and using every charm that he could think of, but nothing seemed to dislodge his brother from the ceiling.

“Sorry, Albus, but no go,” declared Aberforth and Albus sighed. If he had his wand, he could easily get himself down, but the repo-goblins walked off with it.

“No matter, either Minerva or Severus should be able to find a way to get me down,” replied Albus in a resigned voice. “Perhaps, while I’m up here, you could enlighten me to the contents of the folder that the repo-goblins left.”

“I’m a bit curious about this one myself,” muttered Aberforth, as he moved over to the desk, before opening the folder. The younger Dumbledore brother thumbed through the contents of the folder, with his expression growing graver by the second, before shifting towards an expression of slight disgust, seeming lost for words.

“Do tell, please and not keep us in suspense,” declared Phineas in a snide tone of voice.

“Well, Albus, it seems you have just lost every knut in the Dumbledore family vault thanks to where you placed Harry Potter,” declared Aberforth calmly. “And since that wasn’t enough to cover it, all the assets that you own were taken, including the Hog’s Head and my goats, so I hope you’re happy.”

“Not particularly,” replied Albus in a grave voice. “Not only is Harry missing, but we don’t have the resources to locate him.”

"We, Albus," declared Aberforth in a thunderous voice. "You shamed the entire Dumbledore family, so unless you have a mouse in your pocket, there is no we about it. I'm not stepping one foot down your crusade, not that I would have in the first place mind you."

"Now, I put Harry Potter in a home where I feel he would have been safe," declared Albus. "Exactly what Lily and James would have wanted, I might add."

"Albus, bad things happen when act upon what you think other people should want!" snapped Aberforth angrily, which caused Albus to shudder slightly. "I just hope for your sake that the boy is still alive, otherwise you may have some painful explaining to do to the Wizengamot."

"Now, Aberforth, I'm confident that Harry is still alive, Severus is looking for him right now and I have instructed him not to return until he finds Harry," remarked Albus.

"Providing these mobsters that the boy was with don't find Snape first," declared Aberforth. "Actually that won't be the worst outcome, still don't know why you would trust Snape, we both know he is a sneak, listening in when Trelawney read that prophecy..."

"Enough, the reason that I trust Severus is between him and I," declared Albus. "He will return soon enough, with Harry and then he will be safe."

"If you say so," replied Aberforth blandly, humoring his older brother.

"Now if you could please fetch someone to get me down," remarked Albus calmly and Aberforth gave a curt nod, before walking off, as Albus hung from the ceiling, wondering if his situation could get much worse.

Severus Snape's eyes flickered open, with an insidious ringing sensation echoing through his head. The last thing he remembered he came face to face with the Potter brat and attempted to gain information from the boy's mind, under the pretext of determining how Potter knew exactly what the Killing Curse was. On the contrary, Snape suspected that the boy might have pieced two and two

together about what the Potions Master did to those two mobsters, but his actions were far too quick for a six year old who should have been petrified. He had known seventh year Gryffindors who had frozen when come face to face with him, yet this six year old snott nosed brat had shown little fear. As Severus contemplated on it, it seemed to be more like loathing.

“Well, it looks like you’re finally awake, Snape,” declared a cold voice and Snape looked up to see the face of Bartemius Crouch. It was now that Snape realized that his arms were shackled to the wall and his legs to the floor.

“Crouch,” replied Snape calmly. “I’m guessing someone alerted the Aurors to my location and knocked me unconscious from behind.”

“If you must know, you were unconscious once the Aurors showed up, but that is beside the point, Snape,” replied Crouch curtly as Snape looked baffled, wondering who knocked him unconscious.

“You will never be able to hold me, Crouch,” declared Snape coldly. “Once Dumbledore knows...”

“Dumbledore can do nothing, not if he wants to damage his reputation further,” replied Crouch. “Your wand told us all we need to know, the fact you killed two people and placed the Imperius Curse on a young child.”

“Potter needed to be taught a lesson in manners,” replied Snape calmly.

“But who said anything about Harry Potter, Snape,” declared Crouch and Snape winced, his delirious state having caused a slip up. “Still, very interesting, perhaps there is something else you would like to tell us, other than your possession of Ministry restricted body armor.”

Snape remained quiet, refusing to incriminate himself with any further information.

“Snape, you can either tell me willingly, or the Veritaserum can cause you to tell me,” replied Crouch calmly.

"I believe that it is custom to have a trial," remarked Snape in a scathing voice.

"Trials are luxuries given to individuals who don't attempt to use an Unforgivable Curse on a small child," answered Crouch sharply. "Very well, Snape, you will remain here and pending how useful you may be at the Dumbledore hearing, your punishment will be reviewed. Perhaps time will loosen your tongue"

Snape wisely said nothing as Crouch departed, leaving Snape alone with his own thoughts. Dumbledore or the Dark Lord would spring him from Azkaban; it was only a matter of time.

Adrianna Zabini looked over the book that she took from Flamel, in frustration. The rituals inside the book were extremely difficult, perhaps the most complex magic she had ever seen. She reasoned that while there were many other sex change rituals that were much easier to pull off, the effects could have been reversed. The ancient ones detailed in Flamel's book were permanent, but the problem was if one minor part went wrong, the entire ritual was botched. Adrianna found that out the hard way once she attempted it on a mouse as a test, but butchered the animal because she waved her wand at an incorrect angle.

Her daughter was becoming troublesome, as Blaise reminded Adrianna of how she was as a child and if she continued that behavior, it could be a problem once the girl got much older. A problem that Adrianna hoped to correct in time, no matter how long it would take to successfully perfect the rituals whether it be weeks, months, or even years. As long as it was completed before her daughter or rather future son, was to go to Hogwarts, Adrianna wasn't in a hurry. Muggles were nothing but easily manipulated imbeciles. Her husband wouldn't be a threat, as he was preoccupied by this new mob boss and the potential of the weakening of his criminal empire would cause him to lose favor with his men, a fact that Adrianna planned to exploit for her own gain, as her husband became rather close to outliving his usefulness.

Drained from the attempt of the ritual, Madam Adrianna Zabini resolved to attempt again tomorrow and any time she could until she

perfected it. She would not be denied; Adrianna Zabini always got what she wanted.

In his office in one of the worst parts of London, Boss Edward Zabini waited for his report from his men, who had sent a message to his new upstart rival. Frankie and Vito walked inside his office, looking thrilled with themselves.

"Well, I trust you two dealt our new friend a rather strong message," declared Boss Zabini as he placed his hands upon his desk.

"Yeah, boss, we really showed him big time, we slashed his tires and stuff," declared Vito in a pleased voice.

"And we also broke his windows, he won't bother you anymore," said Frankie.

"And did you egg his house, toilet paper it too, perhaps leave a flaming bag of shit by his door before running off cackling like chicken," declared Edward Zabini sarcastically. "Maybe you called his house and told him that Prince Albert was in the bloody can or his refrigerator was running!"

"No boss, but that sounds like a great idea," declared Frankie in an excited tone of voice.

"I was being sarcastic you fool!" exclaimed Boss Zabini. "Give me your gun, Frankie."

Frankie handed over his gun towards Boss Zabini, before Zabini aimed at him before pulling the trigger, shooting Frankie in the chest in cold blood. The mobster dropped to the ground, a blood staining his shirt.

"Would you like to be stupid as well, Vito?" asked Boss Zabini in an icy voice.

"No of course not Boss," declared Vito quickly.

"This is what I get for hiring people who didn't finish school," muttered Zabini as he got to his feet pacing around.

After a few minutes of pacing, with Vito cowering in the corner, looking fearful.

“Next time take the car and blow the fucking thing to smithereens, just make sure no one is inside,” declared Zabini before adding in an afterthought. “Except for maybe my wife, Dolores Umbridge, and that telemarketer that keeps bugging me. Is that clear?”

“Yes, boss it won’t happen again, I swear, if he gets in your way again...” declared Vito before Zabini waved his hand off.

“There wouldn’t have been a next time if you two fools hadn’t bungled everything up,” said Boss Zabini through gritted teeth. “I blame myself personally. If you want something done right, do it yourself. Now leave me.”

Vito quickly backed out of Boss Zabini’s office to avoid his wrath.

“And fetch someone to clean up this mess!” barked Boss Zabini, looking at Frankie, who had since bitten the dust.

Severus Snape sat in a cell in Azkaban, looking outside, two days after that unfortunate incident that landed him inside the prison in the first place. The Dementors would be by once again in any minute, not that it mattered, as his cell was warded against all magic making escape impossible.

“You have a visitor,” declared a curt voice and Snape’s head snapped up, looking to see who it was and Albus Dumbledore made his way towards Snape’s cell, wearing tattered robes.

Dumbledore stood in front of Snape for a few seconds, surveying him before deciding to speak.

“Explain,” declared Dumbledore calmly, without any elaboration, not that Snape needed any.

“As you had requested, I searched for Potter, managing to come across him by mere chance in Diagon Alley,” explained Snape. “The mobsters that had kidnapped Lupin and Potter were also there and they turned their guns on me for no good reason whatsoever. I was

forced to use drastic measures to defend myself as they had intended to kill me for simply attempting to snatch the boy from their clutches. In the heat of the battle, I sent a pair of Killing Curses at them.”

Dumbledore looked as if he aged several years but beckoned for Snape to continue.

“I had attempted to convince Potter to come with me, but the boy was an insolent little brat and refused, so I attempted to force the issue,” declared Snape calmly. “Unfortunately another child was there, apparently a friend of the brat’s, she stepped on my foot, breaking my concentration so I attempted to silence her so I could leave with Potter.”

“What did you do to attempt to silence her, Severus?” asked Dumbledore calmly, but a small part of the Headmaster really didn’t want to know. Snape remained silent. “Severus, you need to tell me everything.”

“Killing Curse,” muttered Snape under his breath. “Potter reacted violently to it and managed to barely pull his friend out of harm’s way. Acted in a way that no six year old had ever acted.”

“Well, Severus, your story partially checks out from the account I managed to get from Amelia Bones after she interviewed the two Aurors who checked your wand,” declared Dumbledore. “You failed to tell me that you put the Imperius on young Harry.”

Snape refused to meet Dumbledore’s eyes.

“Anything else you’d like to add to your story, Severus?” asked Dumbledore in a forced kindly voice.

“I attempted to use Legilimency on Potter as well,” declared Snape slowly, deciding it would be best to get it out of the way, as Dumbledore was intelligent enough to deduce that fact anyway.

“I knew you were hiding something, Snape, the use of Legilimency on a minor is forbidden by Ministry law!” declared a voice in triumph and Barty Crouch walked into the room with a gleeful look on his face. “Dumbledore, I thank you for your help, now the Aurors can escort

you out, see you on the Potter hearing on the twenty first. Until then, don't allow me to catch you anywhere near the Ministry or you may have a cell in this prison next to Snape."

Dumbledore looked at Snape as a group of four Aurors surrounded the Headmaster, wands pointed on him. As the Aurors began to lead Albus Dumbledore away, he slowly turned to Snape with a blank expression on his face before allowing the Aurors to lead him off without a word.

The day of the hearing regarding Dumbledore's handling of Harry Potter had approached. Members of the press, including Rita Skeeter had swarmed the area around the Wizengamot, in an attempt to get an idea of the proceedings. Several Aurors had moved forward.

"Everyone who is not strictly involved with the trial, out," declared an older Auror. "This is not a media circus to sell your papers, this is a serious matter."

The reporters protested loudly at this decision, but backed off when wands were pointed towards them, a few sparks flying threateningly in their direction. Half of the Aurors entered the Wizengamot while the other half remained on the outside to allow any press pests inside.

Once everything had been calmed down, a booming voice echoed throughout the courtroom.

"The prosecutors will be Bartemius Amadeus Crouch, Madam Amelia Susan Bones, Robert Anthony Yaxley, and Minister of Magic, Millicent Annabelle Bagnold, with witness Petunia Dursley," declared the voice. "The defense is of course Albus Percival Wulfric Brian Dumbledore."

"Very well then, Mr. Dumbledore, please tell us of the circumstances that lead to have Harry Potter left with his Muggle relatives," declared Madam Bones in a fair even voice, even though the slight narrowness of her eyes showed that she did not quite approve of this action.

"Very simply put Madam Bones, I had the safety of the boy in mind," declared Dumbledore. "There would be those still with sympathies to Lord Voldemort that might have looked for Harry to finish the job their

master started, so I put him in the last place they would have thought to look, the home of Petunia and Vernon Dursley, where I was confident that Harry would be safe until it was time for Hogwarts.”

“But, that was proven to be false, was it not, Dumbledore?” interjected Crouch. “Did you once check up on the boy during his five years at the Dursleys?”

“No, Bartemius,” declared Dumbledore. “I felt there was no need too.”

“You took such an interest in where the boy was to be put, yet you did not take every precaution to ensure his safety,” said Crouch. “Yet, you took interest to the boy around the time that he had left your mandated safe house. Is that correct?”

“I had only hoped to return Harry to his home...” started Dumbledore but Crouch held up his hand.

“A simple one word answer is all that is necessary, Dumbledore,” declared Crouch.

“Yes,” replied Dumbledore. “You see I had to...”

“I would like to bring to the attention the will of Lily and James Potter,” declared Yaxley in a shrewd voice turning to Madam Bones. “We have a copy that we can use to refresh Albus Dumbledore’s memory with, is that correct?”

“Yes, Yaxley, that would be right, perhaps you would like to do the honors,” declared Madam Bones as she pulled the will out of a pile of documents and handed it to Yaxley, who walked over towards Dumbledore, before using his wand to highlight a section of the will.

“Do us the courtesy of reading us this passage of the will Dumbledore for the court,” declared Yaxley.

“If in the event we die, our son, Harry, is to be placed in the custody of his godfather Sirius Black. If Sirius Black should also die, then Harry should be placed in a loving home that he will grow up happy,” declared Dumbledore before looking up from the will.

"There's more, Albus," replied Yaxley silkily.

"Under no circumstances whatsoever should our son Harry be placed with Petunia and Vernon Dursley," said Dumbledore very quietly.

"Repeat that sentence one further time just for the record, Albus," declared Yaxley.

"Under no circumstances whatsoever should our son Harry be placed with Vernon and Petunia Dursley," repeated Dumbledore in a saddened voice, as many of the Wizengamot court members had their eyes fixed firmly upon him with disgust. "Now I was certain that Petunia would see it in her heart to care for her sister's child."

Petunia snorted in disgust at how someone could be so old yet so naïve.

"Yet, you were wrong, Dumbledore," added Crouch. "The evidence that we saw of the cupboard that the boy had to sleep in was enough to give Vernon Dursley the Dementor's Kiss. Perhaps you would like to view the pictures to refresh your memory?"

"I feel that won't be necessary, Bartemius," declared Madam Bones and at that moment the door of the Wizengamot chamber began to crack open.

"I thought I said that no one was to be in here but those strictly involved in the trial!" barked Crouch as the door opened to reveal a dozen mobsters walking into the courtroom, escorting an intimidating figure with grey hair with signs of balding and black eyes, along with scars on his hand, wearing a suit.

"Oh, but I am involved in this trial very much," declared the lead mobster as he leaned on a stylish looking cane that seemed vaguely familiar to some of the more high profile members of the Wizengamot. "I represent the interests of Harry Potter."

That caught the attention of both Crouch and Dumbledore.

“Very well, you will then tell us where the boy is so the Ministry of Magic can track him down and bring him in,” declared Crouch as he pointed his wand towards the mobsters who laughed at him.

“No, I don’t think we’ll be doing that,” declared the mobster with a smirk and Crouch proceeded to attempt to stun him but he found that his wand didn’t work. “You will also find that your wands have been nullified for the next six hours, a useful yet obscure feature of the Ministry that we’ve managed to discover. Not that you’ll ever discover it mind you.”

“Very well then, we must ask if Harry Potter is safe,” declared Albus Dumbledore calmly.

“Dumbledore, you have no right to...” started Crouch but he was struck silent.

“My wand however does work,” replied the mobster before rolling his eyes. “And yes, I’m a wizard.”

The mobster then turned to Dumbledore with a calculating look.

“So the great and powerful Albus Dumbledore honors me by speaking directly to me. Really my heart’s a flutter!” exclaimed the mobster in a slightly sarcastic voice. “To answer your question, Harry is perfectly safe in fact he’s being taught how to avoid people who might attempt to use him in ways that are most certainly not in his best interest. I also have people teaching my young friend some magical theory, to prepare him for further training later in life to properly defend himself. You’ll be seeing Harry once he is old enough to attend Hogwarts, but only if you behave yourself”

Crouch pointed to his mouth, looking angry, much like a fish out of water.

“Oh, I see you want to speak, very well let’s cancel the spell,” declared the mysterious old man and as a result the spell was cancelled, leaving Crouch with his ability to speak once more.

“I demand to know your name!” yelled Crouch.

"My name is of little importance, not with the information that I have with me pertaining to another charge of mine," declared the mobster.

"Just please state your name for the record," declared Madam Bones in a tired voice before Crouch had another outburst.

"Very well, I have many aliases but I am most commonly known as Allan Michael Barone," replied the mysterious mobster.

"Mr. Barone, you have not only kidnapped Harry Potter, but you have also kidnapped Remus Lupin," declared Crouch in a forced calmness.

"Really, kidnapped is such a harsh term, I merely liberated them from your clutches," declared Barone in a calm voice. "What am I supposed to do, turn Harry Potter over to the magical world so he can be displayed like a circus animal for all to see?"

Barone looked around at the court, who were whispering among themselves.

"As for Remus Lupin, he's been shunned for what he is and I don't think I need to drag that skeleton out of the closet," declared Barone calmly. "He is also perfectly safe, not that many of you care all that much, only because you might try and force information of the whereabouts of young Harry out of him."

"Fair enough," said Minister Bagnold in a tired voice, looking weary as she was very old indeed and reaching the age of retirement. "We will come back to you later Mr. Barone, but right now the matter of Dumbledore's handling of Harry Potter comes first."

"Correct, now I believe Petunia Dursley has something she would like to share with us," declared Crouch.

"Oh believe me I have a whole lot to share with you freaks," declared Petunia harshly. "The minute magic entered my life, it was ruined. Yes, when perfect princess Lily got her letter for that rubbish school, my parents adored her, I was considered second rate. She was special, she was unique, she was a saint that can't do any wrong! Of course, Petunia's nose magically swelling up can't be Lily's fall, she's beautiful and perfect! Petunia had to have provoked her!"

Petunia looked hysterical, before turning to face Dumbledore.

“Once I moved out of the house and married Vernon, I thought I was well shot of this rubbish and I never looked back, but you couldn’t have that Dumbledore,” declared Petunia. “You dumped the boy on my steps, saying that I was to take him in, that we were going to bring that unnaturalness into our perfect life. Of I course I couldn’t refuse, you said in no uncertain terms there were ways to make us normal folk care for your freakish offspring. Believe me, I wanted to go with Vernon’s suggestion and drown that brat in the bathtub the first day he was put there, one less little freak the better, but I was paranoid that you might be watching us and I never wanted to become a puppet.”

Petunia spat the last word.

“And the fact you thought I would change my opinion on your lot shows that you’re a fool Dumbledore, it shows how messed up your world is when someone like you is put in charge of school children!” yelled Petunia, who was getting more hysterical by the second. “I never liked magic, I never like magic, and the sooner your entire lot is hung the better!”

“Did you participate in any abuse on Harry Potter?” asked Crouch.

“No, I didn’t, my husband was the one who did so, but nothing further than a few backhands and using a belt on him for upstaging our son Dudley in school, as it’s obvious that the boy used his hocus pocus rubbish to cheat on his work,” declared Petunia casually. “And one time my husband had a bit too much to drink and broke a glass bottle over the boy’s arm for sneaking into the kitchen to steal food, but he got off lucky in my opinion.”

Several members of the Wizengamot glared at Petunia, who folded her arms, looking very sour.

“Mrs. Dursley, I find it alarming that such bile can be directed towards an innocent child, no matter what your thoughts on your sister was,” declared Madam Bones coldly.

“As if any of your kind could be innocent,” spat Petunia.

"I recommend this court order the Dementor's Kiss, as it is obvious that Petunia Dursley is a danger to herself and others based on her comments today," declared Crouch swiftly.

Madam Bones looked out at the court.

"All in favor of this recommendation," declared Madam Bones and every hand on the Wizengamot raised their hand, some higher than others. "Very well, Petunia Dursley, you will be escorted back to Azkaban and receive the Dementor's Kiss tomorrow morning."

"The next matter is the incident three weeks ago in Diagon Alley," declared Crouch. "Severus Snape attacked Harry Potter in Diagon Alley, killing two men in the process, in an attempt to drag him back to Albus Dumbledore. His wand was tested and found to have cast two killing curses, failed at casting a third, and used the Imperius Curse in a short amount of time. It was also found out that he attempted to use the obscure art called Legilimency, which crudely put is reading other people's minds. An art that is illegal to perform on minors."

"Do you dispute this Dumbledore?" asked Madam Bones.

"No, but Severus Snape had misinterpreted my orders to convince Harry to come with him to ensure his safety," declared Dumbledore calmly.

"Yet, much like Petunia Dursley, you misjudged Snape's character," declared Yaxley with glee in his eye. "I feel that the court should remember that I attended Hogwarts when Snape was there and even though I was two years higher than Snape, the animosity between Severus Snape and one James Potter was all too well known for anyone who attended school during that time period."

"Your point being Yaxley?" asked Madam Bones.

"Dumbledore actually placed Harry Potter in more danger by sending Snape to retrieve him to ensure he was returned to safety," declared Yaxley, adding the last word with quite a sarcastic air. "Many times the child pays for the sins of the father or mother, depending on the

situation and this is a clear case of bad judgment by Albus Dumbledore, one of many.”

Dumbledore lowered his head, it couldn't get any worse but Barone slightly raised his hand.

“The floor recognizes Allan Michael Barone,” declared Madam Bones.

“Dumbledore did commit several serious breaches of logic in his life, but he's not the only one in this room who has wronged someone,” declared Barone. “Harry Potter and Remus Lupin are not the only one's who I have liberated from injustice, I also represent the best interests of Sirius Orion Black.”

The court went so silent you could hear a pin drop.

“You have Black, you are to surrender him to the Ministry immediately or be branded a fugitive yourself Mr. Barone,” declared Crouch as he raised his nonfunctioning wand, before realizing it was still nullified.

“And for the record, there is a five thousand galleon reward that you can collect on if you surrender Black,” declared Yaxley.

“Please, I can buy and sell the Ministry many times over without putting the smallest dent in my bank account,” declared Barone, as he rolled his eyes. “Still, the Ministry can be of some help, as I have been unable to find any records of Sirius Black's trial and I was hoping you might be able to direct me to a copy.”

“Black was never issued a trial,” declared Madam Bones. “I know little more than that, as it was two years before I joined this council.”

“Very well, you're off the hook,” declared Barone with a nod towards Madam Bones. “Still, I am rather confused about something. Sirius Black received a trial yet recently incarcerated Death Eater Lucius Mafloy received a trial where he received the chance to claim he was underneath the Imperius Curse by Voldemort.”

Most of the court winced at the utterance of Voldemort's name.

"You know if I say Voldemort's name, I can gun you down before you finish wincing," declared Barone casually before adding. "Still, back at the matter at hand, Lucius received a trial but was there any reason why Black never received a trial."

"Countless witnesses saw him destroy the street containing the twelve Muggles and Peter Pettigrew!" barked Crouch.

"I believe he was also charged of betraying Lily and James Potter to Voldemort, yes Voldemort, but never given a chance to defend himself in a court of law," prompted Barone.

"Albus Dumbledore gave evidence that Sirius Black was the Secret Keeper to the Potter's, using the Fidelius Charm, which hid the house from view," declared Crouch.

"Dumbledore told you that," said Barone. "As in Albus Dumbledore, the person who has made two bad judgment calls already that have been picked apart in this court."

Dead silence, no one seemed to have had an answer to that.

"I rest my case, Sirius Black gets a fair trial under Veritiserum, brewed by a third party Potion master with no biases either way to state his case," declared Barone firmly.

"You can't just order the Ministry of Magic around," replied Crouch calmly but his eyes showed that he was seething.

"Or Harry Potter will receive his magical education elsewhere," declared Barone sharply. "Have fun explaining that one to the Wizarding World, I wouldn't be surprised if they started bombarding this place with torches and pitchforks. Personally I'm partial to Durmstrang but that's just me."

"Very well, Black will get his trial but it will take weeks, even months to get everything arranged," declared Crouch. "This is a very busy time of year for the Wizengamot."

"Yet you had time to squabble over a six year old when there was no one here to defend him, but in any event, forward the date of the trial

to Gringotts, my associates in the bank will make sure that I hand it over to Mr. Black,” said Barone crisply as he looked around, with the four prosecutors deep in conversation before Madam Bones turned to address the court.

“Based on Albus Dumbledore’s actions, we feel that some form of action needs to be taken,” declared Madam Bones. “I bring forth the recommendation you will never be allowed to attend the Wizengamot as a member, effective immediately stripped of your title as Chief Warlock, along with the order that you voluntarily resign as the Chief Mugwump of the International Confederation of Wizards. You will be allowed to remain as Hogwarts Headmaster but be warned, you will be on probation for a period of five years. Under no circumstances are you to come near Harry Potter during that time period or send anyone to attempt to bring him to you for his own good. If we find you are breaking the terms of this probation, you will be stripped of your Order of Merlin, First Class and will be sent to Azkaban for a period of twenty years.”

Madam Bones paused for a few seconds to allow all that to sink in.

“All those in favor of taking these measures against Albus Dumbledore,” declared Madam Bones and over seventy percent of the Wizengamot members raised their hands. “All against.”

A few people still obviously thought that Dumbledore could do no wrong and raised their hands as well, but they were far from enough to let him off the hook.

“Very well Albus Dumbledore, you are off the Wizengamot and are ordered to resign from the International Confederation of Wizards along with being placed under a five year probation where you are not to come near Harry Potter in that time frame or send anyone to retrieve him,” declared Madam Bones. “Should you break the terms of this probation, you know the consequences.”

Dumbledore nodded grimly.

“Court dismissed,” declared Madam Bones as everyone filed to get out of the courtroom.

The mobsters made their way down towards an empty corridor, making sure no one was there, before Barone pulled his wand out, sealing the door and putting a silencing charm on the perimeter of it.

“Merlin, Harry, imagine the look on those mobsters’ faces if Sirius Black, Harry Potter, and Remus Lupin were in the courtroom right under their noses and they didn’t know it,” declared Sirius to Barone, who was in fact Harry Potter incognito.

“Yes, that was mildly satisfying. Remus, activate our illegally made Portkey if you please,” declared Harry calmly. “I feel a bit tired from holding this form for a long period of time and activating that nullification spell, thanks to the floor plan the goblins gave me on this place, and I would hate to spend an entire week unconscious again.”

Remus nodded, as everyone crowded around the Portkey, before the werewolf activated it. With a yank, everyone was pulled from the Ministry, with no one the wiser of their presence on their day.

In his cavernous base of operations underneath the city of Hogsmeade, Yaxley kneeled before Lord Voldemort.

“Report,” hissed Voldemort.

“My Lord, Albus Dumbledore has been put on probation over the next five years where is not to meddle in the affairs of Harry Potter,” declared Yaxley.

“Perfect, everything works out, the boy will be much easier to find with Dumbledore out of the picture,” replied Voldemort. “Snape’s failure has displeased me greatly, but perhaps all is not lost.”

“My Lord, there is something else you should know,” declared Yaxley.

“Tell,” replied Voldemort.

“The mobsters who have the boy is led by a man named Allan Michael Barone, who is a wizard” declared Yaxley. “Barone nullified every wand inside the Wizengamot; he apparently knows structural secrets within the Ministry that he can manipulate for his own gain.”

This little tidbit caught Voldemort's attention.

"Yaxley, Snape failed me but perhaps you can gain some favor by tracking down this Barone and bring him to me, along with Harry Potter," declared Voldemort. "I must have the pair of them by my side, they will prove to be invaluable to my cause but tread lightly as Snape's botched attempt to nab Potter will make it even more difficult."

"I will not fail you, my Lord," declared Yaxley.

"Let's hope so, for your sake, Yaxley," declared Voldemort as the man gave a short bow, before Voldemort dismissed him with a crude wave of his hand and Yaxley made his way from the room without another word as Voldemort was left with his thoughts.

Chapter Thirteen: Ramifications:

Throughout his life, Albus Dumbledore had weathered many storms where his cunning had been stretched what he perceived to the absolute limits. The battle with Grindelwald that he was famous took its toll on Dumbledore for years both physically and mentally yet Dumbledore managed to recover. The thing was that Albus Dumbledore was not getting any younger and he felt the effects of age more with each passing year. The problem was that the name Dumbledore commanded strength in the Wizarding World and the hive mind like mentality of most in this world mandated that they needed a leader who was powerful enough to command courage to rally against any dark wizard.

Dumbledore had hoped to find a successor to his position of leader of the light in young Harry Potter. The defeat of Lord Voldemort would be the perfect catalyst for Harry Potter to grow into the force that would inevitably rally all against the forces of darkness. Sending Harry Potter to the Dursleys had the intention of keeping the boy grounded, down to earth, and not be blinded by his fame. In his wildest dreams, Dumbledore could never imagine that Petunia Dursley would allow her venom towards her sister to extend to her own nephew and thus stand back while Vernon Dursley took unfortunate liberties with the boy. It was sad when an adult found a need to abuse a child, it really showed weakness in the adult, but yet Dumbledore regretted few things in his life than the fact that he didn't keep a closer eye on the Dursley residence. Harry had to have remained there to be protected but now it was too late. Petunia Dursley was without a doubt receiving the Dementor's Kiss as Dumbledore sat here. Deep down, Dumbledore knew she deserved the kiss.

"The end," replied Dumbledore calmly, more to himself than to the other teachers in the staff room as he spoke. "The end of a glorious life of public service, ending in disgrace, but alas all things must come to an end."

"Now, Albus, they did say you could remain on as the Headmaster of Hogwarts," said Minerva McGonagall.

"No, I cannot in any good conscious stay in a position of power," said Dumbledore. "Especially when hundreds of children are under my charge and I do not wish to fail them, like I had done with young Harry. I fear that my views of life are outdated. It is time to step back and regroup. Effective tomorrow morning I shall resign as Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. "

"No!" replied several teachers in the staff room.

"Yes, it is to be done, the details of the trial will be in the Daily Prophet soon enough," answered Dumbledore sadly. "Reporters have a strange tendency to focus on the negative aspects, sometimes magnifying them to the greatest degree. Even I am not immune to this public prosecution, as the quill of Rita Skeeter has proven in the past. It is best to step out of public view, to not be branded as the wizard who held onto his influence long after he was capable of making acceptable decisions."

"Where will you go from here, Albus?" asked Professor Flitwick.

"One could never tell what path in life they are set up, Filius," responded Dumbledore. "Tomorrow I will give my resignation speech to the children of Hogwarts and then I will throw myself at the mercy, should there be any, of the goblins. From there, I could only guess."

Without another word, Dumbledore stood up and walked out of the staffroom. The Headmaster had never turned back to look at the teachers, many he had worked with for decades and some that he had taught Transfiguration when they were students what seemed like a lifetime ago.

Hermione looked very frustrated as Harry had sat in the chair opposite her, attempting to teach her Occlumency. As Harry had expected, it was going rather slowly, as it was an art that most overage witches and wizards could barely grasp. It took three years for Harry to learn it properly, but Harry had a feeling it would have taken a much shorter amount of time had it not been for Snape. Still, Harry had learned the art eventually and had become rather proficient with the skill of protecting his mind from enemies, as Severus Snape had found out the hard way a while back.

"That was good Hermione, you nearly cast me out this time," said Harry, breaking the silence. The truth was that Harry was holding back quite a bit in his attempts to view Hermione's thoughts, to give her a chance to build up her resistance. As she got better, Harry would fight her attempts to block him a little bit more, until she had master Occlumency.

"I don't know what I'm doing wrong!" exclaimed Hermione in a frustrated voice. "I did everything you told me to, but you're still getting in my head."

"Yes, just keep practicing, remember, you need to distract me with unimportant memories so you have enough time to keep me out of your mind," explained Harry.

"I know, I keep trying!" said Hermione who was hysterical. "I hate this! Why can't I do it right?"

"Hermione most adult witches and wizards have trouble learning this art and you are doing better than anyone could expect for someone your age," replied Harry.

"You can do it," said Hermione as she crossed her arms and stuck her lip out in a pouty, frustrated expression.

"Yes, I can," answered Harry with a slow nod of his head.

"And I have to learn it to know why," grumbled Hermione before muttering something that sounded vaguely like "unfair" under her breath.

"I think that's enough, we need to be heading to school in about a half of an hour and learning Occlumency does make one a bit light headed," said Harry.

"Just one more time, please," pleaded Hermione.

"After we get our homework done, after school, we can practice some more But right now, you need to be at your best after all, you don't want to give any less than your full attention to your most favorite teacher ever, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire,"

said Harry and that particular notion caused Hermione to stick her tongue out in disgust.

The day of school had been a normal day for Harry and Hermione, but when the two children had arrived at Hermione's house, Remus was there with a copy of the Daily Prophet.

"What happened now?" asked Harry as he took the copy of the Daily Prophet and unfolded it, reading the headline on the front cover. Hermione looked like she wanted to stick around to see what this about but her mother had grabbed her by the hand and led her back inside.

"Hermione, come inside, I'm sure he'll be inside in a minute," muttered Marie to her daughter as Harry read the article with a bit of amusement.

Embarrassed by Failure: Dumbledore Resigns from position of Hogwarts Headmaster:

By Rita Skeeter

At the trial just two days ago, Albus Dumbledore was finally held accountable by his actions regarding Harry Potter. Through many damning pieces of evidence (full details on page five), Dumbledore was humbled before the full Wizengamot court. The only prestigious position that remained for the once respected wizard was his position as the Headmaster of Hogwarts, which in this reporter's humble opinion was a questionable decision on the part of the Wizengamot. Dumbledore had already put one child in danger thanks to his despicable actions and questionable judgment, so what kind of parent would allow their child to attend a school run by such a man?

In the end, it appears that Dumbledore himself had foreseen a backlash and as a result announced his resignation at breakfast this morning. This decision was greeted by mixed reactions from all. Some felt that Dumbledore should have resigned years ago, while others were saddened to see the ancient wizard go. So where does Albus Dumbledore go from here? Are his attempts to meddle with the life of Harry Potter, the Boy-Who-Lived over? Legally that might be the case (again, see page five for full details), but as we know, Albus

Dumbledore has found ways to justify many actions that were above the law. Many sources state that there are many skeletons in the Dumbledore closet that have been concealed and this reporter wonders exactly what tales would Albus Dumbledore work so hard to hide. Perhaps in time, that would be discovered.

In the meantime, current deputy Headmistress Minerva McGonagall will fill the role as Head of Hogwarts temporarily until the Board of Governors can find a suitable replacement for Albus Dumbledore. Hopefully this new Headmaster or Headmistress will not make the same mistakes that Albus Dumbledore did during his time at Hogwarts.

Harry lowered the paper.

“So Dumbledore willingly resigned from Hogwarts, that’s very interesting,” remarked Harry. “I wonder if there is more to this than meets the eye.”

“I don’t know Harry, it’s almost like Dumbledore admitted that he made a mistake,” said Remus shaking his head.

“Well there has to be a first time for everything, but I wouldn’t be surprised if he put this down to, hang on let me get my eye twinkle ready, an old man’s mistakes,” answered Harry. “I really don’t think this is over yet. Dumbledore still may have a trick or two up his sleeve yet. I’m not about to let my guard down.

“Another thing Harry, real quick, that’s not the only thing of interest in this paper, it seems Rita Skeeter’s been busy lately,” added Remus, as he grabbed the paper, before he flipped inside the cage.

Ministry Blunders Again: Black Never Received a Trial:

By Rita Skeeter:

During the now infamous Dumbledore trial, very interesting revelations came to light. It appears that receiving a fair and just trial, no matter what the crime, is not a theory that those who run the Ministry actively subscribe to. It was revealed that notorious mass murder Sirius Black had never received his day in court. Black was

alleged to have murdered twelve Muggles and one wizard with one curse. Despite that horrific crime, one would assume that Black would at least have his day in court, to at the very least prove that there was no shadow of a doubt that he was guilty of his crimes. That assumption would be faulty to put it mildly, as the revelation did come to light that Sirius Black never received his crime. Muggle Mafia Boss, Allan Michael Barone (yes, the same Barone that had kidnapped The Boy-Who-Lived) has claimed to represent the best interests of Sirius Black. Using his vast resources to delve deep into the Ministry records, Barone discovered that Black was thrown into Azkaban without a trial. This disturbing claim was made on the heels of the incarceration of Lucius Malfoy. Malfoy had previously claimed he was under the Imperius Curse, but was arrested for assaulting a minor with an Unforgivable curse. Oddly enough, in this tangled web, I feel it would be prudent to remind you that Harry Potter was the minor in question as Lucius Malfoy decided to use his many connections to adopt the Boy-Who-Lived, no doubt for his own gain.

So, what becomes of Black now? Black is currently out of Azkaban, having escaped with several other alleged Death Eaters. The question remains, if Black never received a trial, exactly how many more inside the walls of Azkaban were thrown in without their day in court.

Bartemius Crouch, who made the decision to put Black in Azkaban, could not be reached for comment.

Harry folded the paper and looked into the air.

“The Ministry’s hand will have to be forced now to give Sirius a fair trial,” said Remus after a moment’s pause.

“Ideally yes, but I know all too well how the Ministry works,” remarked Harry. “They sweep their mistakes under the rug as quickly as they can. If and when Sirius gets his trial, it might be a good idea to keep a close eye out for Dementors. I wouldn’t put it past the Ministry to have the Dementors give Sirius the Dementor’s Kiss and pass it off as an accident.”

Time had passed rather quickly without much events as fall turned into winter and time slowly faded into the spring. The mob war with

Boss Zabini continued but it was mostly a lot of strategic planning and very few causalities.

Harry had one eye on the Muggle World, but the other eye was on the Wizarding World, on several potentially profitable businesses for investment. Harry planned on making his move once his Muggle operations were stable. The time between his grandfather's death and Harry taking control was plagued with turmoil, weakening the actual stability of the organization a bit. Thankfully with some help, mostly from Sirius, Remus, and Antonio, but others as well, Harry managed to get everything mostly running. As well as snatching a few key businesses from out from underneath the nose of Boss Zabini, placing himself right in the middle of Zabini dominated areas of Great Britain in several instances. It was a rather bold move on Harry's part, but one that he felt it would be one to cement his status as someone who was not willing to be pushed around. He had a strong feeling that Zabini would not let these actions go on for too long, but Harry had a few contingency plans to deal with the situation as the time came.

Hermione's Occulmency training was going as well as could be expected for someone her age. Harry had to constantly remind Hermione that progress would be slow but that just drove Hermione to want to work harder and when she didn't succeed, it frustrated her to no end. There was a bit of improvement, but Harry was resigned to the fact that it would take time to teach Hermione this rather difficult art. If nothing else, Hermione's enthusiasm to learn tended to be both a blessing and a curse at different periods of time.

The Ministry of Magic seemed to be going out of their way not to acknowledge the fiasco involving Sirius not receiving a trial. In fact, Harry had not heard any word about the Ministry even entertaining the notion of giving Sirius his rightful trial. After the initial article, Rita had written a few more articles condemning the Ministry officials for their actions, but after a while the articles had stopped. Harry had suspected that Rita had been put on a leash by the Ministry and was forced to find new topics to expose to the masses. No doubt by now, the Wizarding World would have found new things to become indignant about and the controversy swept itself under the rug. After figuratively neutering Albus Dumbledore's influence, Harry had

focused on matters in his mafia organization, as he made plans to make it into an empire in the Muggle World before expanding into the Wizarding World, a rather necessary expansion to combat Voldemort on the chance that the Dark Lord would return to a full body. Now, with most of his Muggle operations rather stable, Harry decided that he might have to force the issue regarding Sirius and receiving his trial.

Those thoughts echoed through Harry's mind as he waited outside the school in the early part of April, as the spring breeze whipped into his face. Harry stood right beside a tree as Hermione sat underneath the tree, reading a book just a short while before school started.

"Here comes Evelyn," muttered Harry under his breath, as she saw the snobbish girl walk towards both himself and Hermione. "You really think she would learn after you knocked her into the mud with that accidental banishing charm."

"Well, if it isn't a nerd gathering," remarked Evelyn in snide voice. "Really, those books aren't going to get you any more friends."

"Really," replied Harry calmly. "And I suppose you made loads of friends with your oh so charming and loveable personality."

"Yeah, well you're just jealous," said Evelyn. "I have friends that don't have bushy hair and teeth the size of piano keys."

"Would you like to go for a swim in the mud again?" asked Hermione coolly which caused Evelyn to shriek in horror before leaping back.

"Ick, disgusting, you're gross and a nerd, that's why no one likes you, dorkface," said Evelyn with a sneer.

"Dorkface?" asked Hermione before shaking her head and adding in a sarcastic tone of voice. "Wow that was so funny, I forgot to laugh"

"I'm going to go with all my friends and play while you two get married to books or something, you bushy haired nerd," announced Evelyn.

“Yeah, you go do that but remember, popularity is fleeting,” remarked Harry cynically. “Just wait until your uncle is no longer the teacher. Then you’re get a dose of the real world.”

“You’re just jealous, I’ll be rich and famous and popular and stuff and you’ll be just nothing,” answered Evelyn. “I mean, it’s not like that icky lighting bolt thingy on your forehead is going to give you any fame.”

Loud hysterical laugh erupted from behind Evelyn, causing the young girl to whip around to see Blaise Zabini with her head reared backwards laughing madly with tears rolling down her cheeks from laughing so hard.

“See, even she agrees with me,” replied Evelyn.

“No, I don’t, but I suppose thinking is not what you do,” remarked Blaise in a cold cynical voice, as she started right at Evelyn with her blue eyes. “Now, Simmons, be a good little girl and go run along and play dress up or dolls or something and leave my friends alone.”

Evelyn stomped off angrily to rejoin her friends but she didn’t do much more than that, as she looked a bit intimidated by Blaise.

“Didn’t know, we were friends, Zabini,” replied Hermione calmly.

“Compared to those other dunderheads, you are, Mione,” answered Blaise.

“I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU NOT TO CALL ME THAT, ZABINI!” yelled Hermione angrily, which caused even Harry to cringe. Even during the old timeline, Hermione absolutely hated to be called “Mione” and that particular quirk started at a young age.

“Damn it girl, don’t shout so loud,” hissed a voice from within a patch of nearby grass and Harry turned around to see a snake flickering out of the grass. Blaise’s attention seemed to be attracted as well.

“Cool, a snake,” said Blaise as she peered into the grass. “Wonder if we can set it on Simmons.”

"I wouldn't take a bite out of that girl even if she was the last piece of meat on earth," hissed the snake in an irritable tone. "My fangs have standards."

Harry laughed at that.

"You understood what that snake said, didn't you?" asked Hermione, as she peered over the book.

"Harry, come here a minute, I need to tell you something away from the M-U-G-G-L-E," interjected Blaise in a slightly frantic voice.

"Jeez, it must be nice to be able to spell," replied Hermione in a sarcastic voice. "Whatever you can say in front of Harry, I think you can say in front of me."

"Besides, she's a muggleborns witch anyway," muttered Harry softly.

"I could hear you, you know," replied Hermione with a frown.

"Okay, you're a Parseltongue, as in you can talk to snakes" said Blaise taking a deep breath. "For the most witches and wizards, that's bad. Really bad."

"It's just another language," stated Harry with a shrug of his shoulder.

"Yes," remarked Blaise. "It's just that a lot of bad wizards speak it."

"Well, that doesn't mean anything, as if you spoke the language, you wouldn't run your mouth about being able to speak it, at the risk of being declared bad," said Harry.

"I agree, I actually think it's cool, but if I was you, don't tell anyone else about it," said Blaise. "People might take it the wrong way."

"Humans act stupid when they don't form their own opinions," hissed the snake. "Speaking a language is not evil, but exploiting my kind for the wrong purposes is."

"Agreed," remarked Harry in Parseltongue, which neither of the girls understood.

"We better get going," said Hermione suddenly, as she looked at her watch and saw many of the other students. "Class starts in a little bit."

"Take me with you," demanded the snake to Harry. "It's so dreadfully dull out here, no others of my kind around for miles."

"Wait a minute, you want me to take me with you," said Harry in a skeptical voice. "I don't know..."

"I can sense you are a great wizard and all great wizards require a familiar," answered the snake. "As a symbol of respect and as proof to your enemies of your power."

"Harry," said Hermione in a bit more forceful voice.

"Well, what if I don't want to be different?" suggested Harry coolly before shaking his head as Hermione frantically tugged on his sleeve. "Fine, if you insist, but only if you promise not to draw attention to yourself."

"I will only draw as much attention as it is necessary for my kind, which really isn't too much at all," informed the snake. "I do prefer to remain alive after all."

"Come forth, and you will require a name," said Harry in an afterthought as Harry bent down to allow the snake to slither around his right arm before he followed Hermione, who was starting to walk towards the school.

"Why?" questioned the snake.

"Because, I don't want to have to refer to you as, the snake," answered Harry shaking his head. "It would get a bit repetitive after a while."

"Quite," agreed the snake.

"Since I'm a mob boss, it's fitting that I should name my familiar something...well fitting," hissed Harry in Parseltongue, so no one could overhear him. "So, you will now be referred to as Vinny."

"You call me Billy-Bob-Joe-Bob-Ray-Bob-Fred-Billy-Bob-Ralph, for all I care, as long as it leads to a more interesting life than what I had before," answered the snake as Harry and Hermione walked into the school.

"I'm almost tempted to change your name to that, just so I can declare that something has a longer name than Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire," replied Harry. "However, for simplicity's sake and the fact I don't want to lose my voice by just saying your name, we'll stick with Vinny."

Harry turned to Hermione who stood in the hallway.

"You're really going to bring that snake into class, aren't you?" asked Hermione.

"Yep," responded Harry.

"Gillworth isn't going to like that if he finds out, you know," said Hermione.

"I know," answered Harry with a mischievous smile and Hermione was struggling very hard not to break out into mad giggles as well at the thought of Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire's reaction if he had found a real life snake in his classroom.

Around this time in a backwoods area, Crabbe and Goyle continued their usual misadventures. The dynamic duo, after these many months, still hadn't collected all the items that their master, the Dark Lord had told them to in a period of time that was going on six months.

"Dear lad, perhaps entering that troll den during mating season was a blooming disaster," said Goyle as he bent over, in slight pain and walked bowl legged across the woods. "Especially when those brutes mistook me for a female troll and well...you saw what happened as you stood their and watched Crabbe."

Crabbe stood their, blank look etched upon his face as he stared at Goyle.

“Damn it man, we need to come forth, the Dark Lord is counting on us to get these pivotal items, the entire fate of his campaign rests on our shoulders,” continued Goyle. “So let us press on bravely among our...”

A large explosion echoed throughout the woods. Goyle jumped backwards and pulled out his wand, holding it stiffly in front of him.

“I say, who goes there!” demanded Goyle. “I warn you, I am one of the most valued followers of the Dark Lord and a master of the dark arts.”

As Crabbe rolled his eyes, out of the fog walked a black midget wearing a groovy mullet and pornstache, dressed in what looked like Muggle army fatigues, armed with a crossbow in one hand and a wand in one hand.

“By jove, Crabbe, I do say if that’s not a Leprechaun!” shouted Goyle in a jovial voice as he pointed at the midget. “Maybe he can point us in the right direction to these items.

“G’day, mate,” said the midget, speaking in a very prominent Australian accent, addressing Crabbe. “The name’s Schwartz, Killer Schwartz, the most prominent troll hunter in the world and I hear word that trolls are in the area.”

“I say my good sir, could you point us to the direction of a place where we can get milk, eggs, and bread?” inquired Goyle but a razor sharp arrow flew through the air, nearly parting Goyle’s hair. “I beg your pardon, but I do say, what is the meaning of this.”

“Enough small talk, troll,” said Schwartz as he pointed his wand at Goyle. “I’m going to put you down and sell you to the Magical Zoo, beast.”

“You fool, you think I’m a troll, do you even know what a troll looks like?” demanded Goyle.

“No, but I do know what it smells like and you have troll smell all over you, so therefore all logic indicates that you are in fact a troll,” informed Schwartz. “Don’t be bushwhacking my intelligence, mate.”

"I warned you, Leprechaun, the Dark Lord himself taught me some of the most dangerous spells in the world," said Goyle as he waved his wand in a threatening manner.

"I don't care if your mama taught you how to square dance, you will not be escaping the wrath of Killer Schwartz, Bubba," said Schwartz.

Goyle raised his wand but Schwartz was quicker on the draw, with Goyle's wand flying out of his hand and another explosion sent him backwards into a tree. With another flick of his wrist, Schwartz had bound Goyle up in a magical net.

"Crabbe, you blooming bubbling dunderhead, do something and free me!" responded Goyle, but Crabbe responded with a blank look on his face, his eyes crossed and drool flowing from his mouth.

"I'm rather disappointed, I thought one so smelly would put up more of a fight," muttered Schwartz shaking his head before addressing Crabbe. "Don't worry, mate, this fool won't be getting all up in your area any more."

Without a word, Schwartz took the trapped Goyle and disappeared, leaving Crabbe all alone. Crabbe stood there for a few minutes and when he was sure the coast was clear, he pumped up his fist in triumph before going forth to purchase the items the Dark Lord required from a grocery store, just as he had been suggesting to Goyle for months on end.

Back at Harry and Hermione's school, Gillworth paced back and forth with a look on his face, with a disgusted look on his face.

"A certain revelation hit me, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire, this morning," said Gillworth "The fact remains that very few of you will ever amount to anything. I have been placed with the unfortunate responsibility of teaching ugly children, stupid children, and stupid ugly children, for very little pay I might add."

Gillworth reached over to his desk and pulled out a stack of papers.

"The results of your last spelling examination proved to be rather abysmal with the exception of two students in this classroom and I

have a feeling you two collaborated to cheat on my test," added Gillworth. "Isn't that right, Miss Granger and Mr. Potter?"

"Perhaps we're just smarter than everything else in this classroom," suggested Harry.

"Harry, that isn't a nice thing to say," reprimanded Hermione, before adding in a whisper. "Even if it is true."

"Two perfect scores, completely undermining my system," continued Gillworth as he bent down right towards Harry's desk. "Once I can prove it, Mr. Potter, you will be kicked out of my class."

Harry looked at Gillworth, a bullet right between his eyes seemed rather appealing at the moment.

"I don't think you can prove it," remarked Harry, looking at Gillworth with haunting green eyes. "Nothing to prove really, Remy."

"You will address me with respect, you impudent brat!" yelled Gillworth and Vinny the snake poked his head out of Harry's sleeve to look around.

"You know, some people are trying to sleep here," said Vinny with an irritable hiss and Gillworth jumped back in absolute terror.

"OH MY GOD, IT'S A SNAKE!" shrieked Gillworth, nearly knocking over his desk. "Mr. Potter...you know...perhaps I was mistaken..."

Gillworth's legs shook, before he collapsed, shaking madly, before rolling over, pale in fear, cowering behind his desk.

"Please stop, the horror, fangs, no, no, take it away, get rid of it, someone stop it!" cried Gillworth poking his head from behind his desk and saw that the snake was still there "No, it's still there!"

"Pathetic," interjected Vinny. "Doesn't he know that I won't bite him? I don't want indigestion."

"Who knew Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire had Ophidiophobia," said Harry and as a result, he got confused looks

from everyone in the class, including Hermione. "That means he's afraid of snakes."

"Take that thing away, can't you see he's terrified!" demanded Evelyn.

"I don't think I can see that quite yet. I think we should leave the snake in here for a few more hours or maybe the rest of the year to just make sure," replied Harry.

"But if you want to get rid of it, Evelyn, be our guest," added Hermione, smirking at the pompous girl's growing sense of irritation.

"Eww, gross!" shrieked Evelyn as she got up to her feet before moving to the door. "I'm telling the headmistress, you two are in for it now!"

With that, she pushed the door open, before stomping through the hall, throwing a temper tantrum as she made her way down the hallway.

"Is that snake still out there?" whimpered Gillworth from behind his desk in a small, voice.

"Yes, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire!" chanted the class in unison which caused Gillworth to make loud sobbing noises from behind his desk.

Gillworth cowered behind his desk for a few more minutes, before the classroom door opened and the Headmistress entered the classroom, followed by Evelyn, who looked rather pleased with herself, looking at Hermione and Harry with a vastly smug look on her face.

"It's him, Headmistress Ingles!" screamed Evelyn. "Harry Potter, he had a snake and he threatened that he would feed all of us to it unless we did exactly what he said.

"Oh puh-lease," hissed Vinny angrily as he rose up to allow Ingles to get a better look.

"Miss Simmons, back to your seat if you please," ordered Ingles with a stern glare as Harry privately wondered if Minerva McGonagall had

died, as Ingles sure seemed to be channeling her spirit at the moment. Evelyn walked back to her seat.

“Allow me to explain, m’am,” said Harry in a false sugary sweet voice that caused Hermione turn her back slightly, so she could stuff her fist in her mouth to stifle her giggles at how overdone Harry’s innocent act was.

“Yes please do, because I am a loss at why exactly you would want to bring a snake of all things into a classroom,” answered the Headmistress.

“Well, you see, I have recently joined a new religion,” said Harry quickly. “It has to do with worshipping snakes as gods and our faith requires us to carry around a snake as a familiar.”

“As a familiar, you say, Mr. Potter,” repeated Ingles in a slow voice, as this sounded dangerously like a cult. “Well, as much as I am tolerant of all religions...”

“GET THAT INFERNAL THING OUT OF MY CLASSROOM!” yelled Gillworth in a horrified voice and Ingles whipped around, staring at the desk.

“Gillworth, be quiet or I’ll have to cut your pay!” snapped Ingles in a sharp voice.

“What pay?” questioned Gillworth. “I believe children in sweatshops in third world countries make more money a day then I do in a year.”

Ingles turned around to stare at Harry, deciding to ignore Gillworth who continued to whimper behind his desk.

“Fine, Mr. Potter, you want to have the snake in here, you can keep it, but under one condition,” continued Ingles quickly.

“Anything,” replied Harry, flashing an innocent smile towards the Headmistress.

“Keep it, but if it bites anyone...well anyone important, it will be out of here,” said Ingles. “Understood?”

“NO!” cried Gillworth as he wept in terror of a slimy reptile taking up presence in the classroom.

“Yes, understood, Vinny won’t bite anyone in this classroom,” said Harry sweetly.

“Nor would I want to,” added the snake in a disgusted tone.

“Very well, I have important matters to attend to and Gillworth, get out from behind that desk, now!” demanded Ingles and Gillworth pulled himself to his feet, legs trembling in fear.

“That’s not fair!” yelled Evelyn. “Why should he be allowed a pet?”

“Miss Simmons, would you like to have to stay after school?” asked Ingles, as she narrowed her eyes.

“No,” said Evelyn before turning to glare at Harry and Hermione, folding her arms in disgust.

Ingles turned to leave the classroom, walking down the hallway as Gillworth looked at Harry with a mixture of fear and loathing, before shaking his head to regain his composure.

“On with class, then,” said Gillworth in a shaky voice. “Today’s arithmetic lesson will feature...”

Narcissa Black sat in the Headmistress’s office at Hogwarts, twirling her hair while she awaited Professor McGonagall. Her goal was to acquire the position of Potions Professor that was vacated because of Severus Snape’s untimely incarceration in Azkaban prison. Snape looked at the potential of life in Azkaban and they were still reviewing the case from what Narcissa heard, with potential for the Dementor’s Kiss to be added on. The Wizengamot was swamped with legislation, mostly involving reducing the rights of werewolves and vampires, spearheaded by Dolores Umbridge, a key member of the Department of the Regulation and Control of Dangerous Magical Creatures. Many believed that Umbridge loved her job a little too much but still was ambitious enough to move up in the world to further push her agenda against half breeds. She backed Cornelius Fudge, who was one of the front runners to take the spot of Minister of Magic, along with

Bartemius Crouch, once Minister Bagnold had retired. Dumbledore had obviously been a choice, but his disappearance combined with the recent scandal involving Harry Potter made his ascension to Minister impossible.

Matters at the Ministry were far from Narcissa's mind as she awaited McGonagall for her job interview. Narcissa had always excelled in Potions, receiving an Outstanding grade in her N.E.W.T. examination. So, she was qualified to teach the subject but the reasons that she was applying for the subject were far from her qualifications. Recently, her sister, Bellatrix, had come to her with a message from the Dark Lord himself. Since Snape had proven himself to be an absolute failure, the Dark Lord didn't have a spy within Hogwarts on the teaching staff. So, Narcissa was to do everything in her power to get her hands on the position and report occasionally to Bellatrix, who would pass off any important information to the Dark Lord.

At times, Narcissa had hoped she had seen the last of the Dark Lord, but that hope was not to be. Granted, in the beginning, she supported the Dark Lord one hundred percent. His aims for the purification of the magical race were admirable and as a respected pureblood, Narcissa had to admit the Dark Lord said the right things. Over time through, it became clear to Narcissa, although she never dared voice this opinion that the Dark Lord was only out for power for himself. Lucius had deluded himself to the point that the Dark Lord would put him in a better position, discounting the fact that the Malfoy name held enough pull to gain a fair amount of power. Narcissa was almost sure that others who had previously supported the Dark Lord had come to the realization that he had only been out for his own glory in the magical world. They did not state their claims because they feared retribution from the Dark Lord and his legions of devoted followers.

Bella, on the other hand, wasn't devoted to following the Dark Lord. Rather, she was completely obsessed with him. Even when they were children, Narcissa knew her sister to be a bit eccentric for lack of a better turn. After many years of serving the Dark Lord and an extensive period in a high security cell in Azkaban, with constant exposure to Dementors, had driven Bellatrix to the point of uncontrollable madness. She needed mental help, but the Dark Lord

had encouraged and at times exploited her insanity for his own benefit. Bella would not listen to any reason, other than the Dark Lord's, and that made her dangerous. There were times that Narcissa had feared for her life and the life of her son when Bella had paid her a visit, choosing her words carefully and not saying anything to might be misinterpreted as disrespect towards the Dark Lord.

These thoughts were not dwelled upon much longer as McGonagall had entered the office, looking a bit worn out. It was obviously that she expected Dumbledore to be Headmaster for many years to come and being trust in the Headmistress position on little notice came as a bit of a shock.

"Miss Black, I do apologize for being late, I've not be able to find a suitable Transfiguration Professor as well to take my place, so juggling both the responsibilities of being Headmistress and still teaching can be a bit overwhelming at times," remarked McGonagall in a tired voice and Narcissa nodded politely. "I'll be quite glad when the Board of Governors decides a permanent Head."

McGonagall cleared her throat, before assuming her usual stern demeanor.

"Miss Black, you are here to apply for the job as Potions Professor, if I'm not mistaken," continued McGonagall.

"Yes," answered Narcissa, making sure to maintain eye contact and proper composure as she addressed McGonagall. "I trust you found my note citing my marks in Potions throughout Hogwarts."

"I did," said McGonagall. "And Professor Slughorn was rather complimentary on your performance when he taught you. I do have a few more applications to go through but your abilities in Potions are far and above those who applied for some time. There is, but one area of concern..."

"My ex-husband, correct," interjected Narcissa.

"Unfortunate, but the Board of Governors has not been too complimentary on Lucius," said McGonagall. "He may have used

blackmail to persuade their decisions one time too many. I wasn't there, so I don't know, but I have in fact heard the rumors."

"Lucius did some questionable things, along with what got he thrown into Azkaban," replied Narcissa. "I'm not denying that, but I tried not to go out of my way to find out to the extent of what my former husband did."

"I only ask this, because, I would hate to have to repeat the Severus Snape fiasco and have someone fully in support of You-Know-Who working in Hogwarts," said McGonagall and Narcissa responded by rolling up both of her sleeves, exposing her bare forearms.

"My ex-husband has a dark mark, as you see, I do not," said Narcissa crisply. "He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named had some interesting aims that I at one time agreed with but once I saw what he was truly about, I tried to distance myself away from him as far as possible. It's a shame Lucius did not. I do hope that I have put your fears to ease."

"Yes, for the time being, but the Board of Governors are taking an active role after some of the hiring decisions Dumbledore made during his time as Headmaster," said McGonagall. "Snape, Trelawney, more Defense Against the Dark Arts teachers who weren't qualified than I care to remember. The truth is, you may very well get the job just on your qualifications alone, but with your ex-husband, if someone with credentials that are just as acceptable, they would be more likely to get the job."

Narcissa nodded slowly, it was a roadblock that she had foreseen but for her sake, she had to get that job as Potions Professor.

"I suspect you will be hearing from the Board of Governors in June or July either way," concluded McGonagall.

"Yes, thank you for your time," said Narcissa as she rose to her feet in a dignified matter before bidding McGonagall farewell and departed the Headmistress's office.

On a slow Saturday morning in the latter part of April, at the headquarters of Harry's mob organization, Harry sat in his office looking over the financial records of his many investments. Sirius sat

in his office, looking bored as he absent mindedly read the Daily Prophet. Even after all of these months, Harry had not heard one word for the Ministry about Sirius's trial, which agitated both Sirius and Harry to no end. Harry began to make vague plans to force the issue, but an opportunity fell into his lap so to speak.

"Hmm, this is interesting, the Daily Prophet is suspending operation until further notice," muttered Sirius as he looked at the paper.

"Wait, why?" asked Harry.

"Hang on a minute..." said Sirius as he read the article for a few seconds. "Something about their distribution contract negotiations running into a snag and not having the proper funding to print the paper anymore. Their business model isn't the best to be frank, charging a fraction for the paper of what it actually takes to print the paper. A shame, as despite how sketchy some of the information is, it is an outlet to get a vague picture. Now unless someone decides to step in and pick up the distribution contract, the Daily Prophet is finished."

Harry sat, rubbing his chin with a thoughtful look on his face.

"Yes, a shame, but what if someone who does have the funds to pay whatever the Prophet does pick up their distribution contract?" asked Harry, his eyes full of glee as he bounced up to his feet, before walking over to the cupboard to grab a vial of potion.

After taking a sizeable gulp of potion, Harry's features contorted to that of his alter ego as the Ministry knew him on that day of the Dumbledore trial, Allan Michael Barone.

"Where exactly are you going, anyway, Harry?" asked Sirius, even though he did have a good idea, he just wanted to make sure.

"Come on Sirius, you didn't think I'd miss a business opportunity like this, would you?" asked Harry in a rhetorical manner. "If all goes according to plan, the Ministry of Magic will be forced to give you your trial, no excuses whatsoever."

With that, Harry went downstairs to proceed to tell his men of his plan to begin to put their operations into the Wizarding World. This was the first step to test the waters for future operations and Harry proceeded to go to the center of all financial operations in the Wizarding World, Gringotts.

After getting everything in order, hours later, after a quick stop at the Law Office of Schyster and Boldface, several members of Harry's criminal organization arrived at Gringotts, with the disguised young mob leader in tow. They entered the bank, looking around to see many goblins lurking around. Even some of these hardened mob members found themselves a bit intimidated by the goblins, but did their best not to show any emotion.

"Excuse me," said Harry to a goblin sitting behind the front desk.

"May I help you?" asked the goblin in a cold voice.

"I am here to inquire about the recently open distribution contract for the Daily Prophet," answered Harry which caused the goblin's eyes to snap up with glee.

"Naturally, right this way, Mr. Potter," said the goblin prompted and Harry looked dumbstruck, wondering exactly how the goblin knew him.

"Stay out here, this shouldn't take too long, but if anyone suspicious comes this way, follow them," muttered Harry.

"Right, Boss Potter," answered the mobsters and Harry followed the goblin down the halls of Gringotts to a large conference room while the goblin motioned for him to sit down

"I shall return in a minute with the owner of the Daily Prophet, to speak on the terms of the distribution," said the goblin as he walked off.

Harry sat in relative silence and a moment later, the goblin returned with a man in his early sixties with stringy grey hair and slightly tattered black robes.

“Ah, it wasn’t quite who I expected to pick up the distribution contract for the paper, but I suppose the Ministry has their reasons in sending someone else other than that foul woman to conduct business,” said the Daily Prophet owner. “Still, if the Ministry isn’t willing to...”

“I’m not from the Ministry,” announced Harry who looked very interested in this proclamation and it explained a lot about how the Ministry could really lean on the Daily Prophet when they wanted to. “I do however have an offer you can’t refuse.”

“Really, well, I’m listening,” said the Daily Prophet owner before extending his hand to shake Harry’s. “Reginald Baxter, Owner of the Daily Prophet.”

“Boss Allan Michael Barone, Mafia Boss,” replied Harry as he took Baxter’s hand and shook it.

“The same Barone who has custody of Harry Potter?” inquired Baxter.

“Yes, I’m that guy, but that’s beyond the point,” said Harry. “The offer is clear, five million galleons...”

“Just to pick up the distribution contract!” exclaimed Reginald Baxter in an excited voice. That amount was many times more than he wanted from the Ministry.

“No, please let me finish,” amended Harry. “I want complete and full ownership of the Daily Prophet.”

In a hundred years, Reginald Baxter would not have expected anyone to offer to buy the Daily Prophet, which despite its high distribution, didn’t net enough to turn a profit. The precise reason why he had to enter this unholy alliance with the Ministry and tow the line, instead of presenting a balanced view as any publication should.

“Complete and full ownership you say,” repeated Baxter in a bit of a shocked voice.

“Just sign on the dotted line,” answered Harry as he removed a completely legally binding contract. “And you have enough money to retire?”

"Are you certain you can afford this price?" questioned Baxter.

"Human, this man right here makes about that much in interest in the time it takes to blink your eyes," informed the goblin.

"Well that may just be a bit of an exaggeration, but I am well off," added Harry. "This is just pittance as far as I'm concerned."

Baxter read the contract over, very carefully.

"It says here that I get forty percent of all subscription sales," said Baxter.

"A gesture of goodwill on my part, as money is not a problem as far as I'm concerned," replied Harry. "It's not the value of gold I'm worried about, it's the power of the printed word that is priceless and the Daily Prophet's distribution is great."

"Well, you've sold me," concluded Baxter as a quill and bottle of ink magically appeared in front of him, and he signed the contract and then slid it over to Harry to sign the contract. Once the contracts were signed, a duplicate was magically made, to give Baxter a copy for his own records while a third copy was made for Gringotts' records.

"Pleasure doing business with you," said Harry.

"Likewise," answered Baxter and at that moment, a second, rather disgusted goblin entered the room with an unfortunately familiar face.

"Ah, Mr. Baxter, you're here, excellent," said Dolores Umbridge in a sickly sweet voice and at this point, Vinny the snake poked his head out from underneath the sleeve of Harry's traveling cloak.

"What in the hell is that thing?" demanded Vinny.

"The ultimate toad bitch from hell," replied Harry in a low voice, careful not to allow Umbridge or anyone else hear him speaking Parseltongue.

"The Ministry is willing to bump up the contract to twenty five thousand galleons, more than acceptable and this our final offer,"

said Umbridge calmly before she locked eyes on the form of Barone. "The infamous Mr. Barone, I presume."

"You presume correctly...I'm sorry, I haven't had the er pleasure," said Harry.

"Oh yes, forgive me, Dolores Umbridge at your service," informed Umbridge as she extended her hand out for Barone to shake but he didn't take it.

"I prefer not, I just washed," answered Harry with a disgusted voice and Umbridge looked at him with a disapproving glare.

"Ah, what would a Mudblood such as yourself know about proper etiquette," said Umbridge before turning to Baxter. "Onto more important matters, what do you say to this offer, Mr. Baxter? I have the contract drawn up right here."

Umbridge reached out with her pudgy hand, contract in hand and shoved it right under Baxter, before looking at him with a smug look.

"Well, Madam Umbridge, I have this to say about your contract," answered Baxter and without another word, he ripped the contract in half, before shoving it in her face. "Good day to you all."

Umbridge stood there in shock and after a moment, Harry couldn't contain himself any longer, he burst out into laughter.

"May I ask what is so funny, Barone?" demanded Umbridge, not sounding like her artificially sweet self at all.

"You mean besides the fact you were bred from a human and a toad," suggested Harry. "No, the fact remains that I was here to witness the Ministry's greatest blunder yet. You shortchanged perhaps the greatest resource at your disposal and now I have it, thus putting the Ministry at my collective mercy, which I can assure you I have very little?"

"Exactly, what are you getting at, criminal?" asked Umbridge.

"I now own the Daily Prophet and thus the Ministry has no power of what is written in it," said Harry.

"THE MINISTRY WILL NOT STAND FOR THIS!" shrieked Umbridge.

"I doubt the Wizarding World would care too much if they found out that the government pretty much ran the biggest paper," said Harry. "I'm going to bring integrity back to the press, as foreign as a concept that might seem like."

Umbridge looked absolutely agitated.

"Other papers can be started up," remarked Umbridge when she finally found her voice.

"And Ministry of Magic building can also spontaneously combust unless you give Sirius Black his rightful trial," commented Harry in a casual voice. "You will deliver a message to the Ministry, that Sirius Black will receive his rightful trial or so help me, the Wizarding World will suffer a cataclysmic disaster that will make Lord Voldemort seem like a boy scout."

"Is that a threat?" whispered Umbridge.

"No, of course not, but you do have to admit, accidents do happen," said Harry in a gruff voice. "What won't be an accident is what I can write in the Daily Prophet that can destroy reputations of certain Ministry officials."

"So, you are going to blackmail us with lies, Barone," answered Umbridge in a disgusted voice.

"Why use lies, when the complete and accurate truth is more damaging?" asked Harry before staring at Umbridge. "And while I'm on the subject, I have a special message to Crouch, because I know for a fact that he's doing everything in his power to make sure Sirius doesn't get his day in court. So tell him that I know his biggest, most guarded secret, the secret that he doesn't want to get out and will destroy his entire life if I tell it. So, hop onto the Ministry and deliver my messages, if you will."

Umbridge pulled out her wand with a misguided notion to curse him but Harry quickly pulled out a handgun before shooting towards Umbridge.

Umbridge flinched but Harry had shot it at an angle that caused the bullet to miss for several inches and lodge itself in the wall behind Umbridge.

"Next time, I won't miss," whispered Harry as he held the gun in a threatening matter and the look in his eyes indicated to Umbridge that he wasn't kidding.. "Next time it will be right in your skull, Dolores."

Umbridge didn't bother to respond, just glaring at Harry with a hateful look on her toad face.

"Deliver my message as indicated," answered Harry before adding as an afterthought. "Tell them they have one week, no more. Is that understood?"

"Yes!" snapped Umbridge in a hateful voice as she walked from her office, muttering obscenities underneath her breath.

"You should have shot her with that firearm," remarked one of the goblins in a casual voice to Harry before the Boy-Who-Lived-Twice rose to his feet and walked from the office down the hallway to greet his mobsters. He had other business to attend to on this day.

Chapter Fourteen: Avenged.

While scaring Umbridge out of her wits wasn't exactly the number one highlight of Harry's second time around, it definitely ranked number three right beneath tricking Lucius out of the Malfoy family fortune and knocking Snape unconscious. The foolish toad actually thought Harry was going to shoot her. An enticing outcome to be sure, but Harry played the game rather well and soon enough, a punishment suitable for someone of Umbridge's level would be devised in time.

There would be ample time for pleasurable revenge in the not so distant future but business came first and foremost, as Harry arrived at the headquarters of the Daily Prophet newspaper, under the guise of grizzled mobster Allan Michael Barone. Taking in the landscape, Harry suspected that upkeep of the building wasn't in the Daily Prophet budget, as it looked like they were printing the Wizarding World's highest circulated out of a rundown, rat-infested flat. Making a mental note to make some renovations later, Harry made his way into headquarters, to hold a meeting with all the reporters, photographers, and assorted other misfits who worked for the Daily Prophet.

Harry arrived and everyone sat around, chattering in an animated fashion.

"Now that I'm here, we're going to begin," interjected Harry, causing the occupants of the room to look around and do a double take when they saw exactly who was standing before them. " For those who don't know me, I am Allan Michael Barone, yes, the mob boss who took Harry Potter away from his troubled existence in the Muggle World. As it turns out, no one will be losing their jobs, not yet anyway, as I have purchased the Daily Prophet and will be resuming operations as scheduled, beginning effective immediately tomorrow."

"What do you mean no one will be losing their jobs, yet?" asked one of the reporters.

"Just what I said, all your work will be evaluated and those who pass for acceptable will remain their jobs and those who I feel are a liability to my organization will have their jobs at the Daily Prophet

terminated,” answered Harry. “Everyone will get a fair and just evaluation, no matter what you might have written about me.”

Harry looked around, and indeed, a few of the reporters, including one Rita Skeeter, had written some things that painted one Allan Michael Barone in a rather negative light. Most of it was under Ministry order, as no doubt certain Ministry officials wanted the Boy-Who-Lived for their own twisted, quite political agenda.

“Now, the Ministry of Magic no doubt prevented your talents from being utilized at the fullest,” continued Harry. “Certain things that they did or rather didn’t do, they tried to hush up and prevent you from reporting the truth. This will change, as the Ministry has no leverage over me and it wouldn’t be a good idea to try to enrage me, simply because of my charge, young Harry Potter. Otherwise, this headline in a future Daily Prophet might come to light, “Boy-Who-Lived Chooses to Attend Durmstrang over Hogwarts, Due to Guardian’s Distaste over Ministry Action”. A rather catchy title and the story that fits it would tank the Ministry’s reputation, would it not?”

The people in the room nodded politely, some of them no doubt having uncovered certain things about the Ministry.

“So, I have very little to say, except I encourage you to get back to work and remember, reporting the truth can be more damaging to fabricating a blanket of lies. You are all excused...except for you, Ms. Skeeter,” said Harry, causing Rita to flinch slightly and the others got up to their feet, to go back to their usual duties, leaving Rita and Harry alone.

“Yes, Mr. Barone,” said Rita after a few seconds silence

Harry shook his head, before waving his wand, causing three parts of the building to glow, spotting spying charms, no doubt set up for the Ministry. Shaking his head, Harry knew he would have to teach them a lesson and sent a low powered sonic vibration spell to destroy the little presents that the Ministry had left him. A slight ringing echoed throughout the building and Harry knew his work was successful. The ringing would be louder within the Ministry.

“Now down to business, let me make one thing perfectly clear, Ms. Skeeter, now that I own the Daily Prophet, you work for me,” said Harry. “And it would bug me to see such a talented reporter having to lose their job. This Daily Prophet needs to grow wings and move to greater heights, but to do that, your venom needs to be directed towards those who are polluting the Ministry with their outdated ideas. They will be swatted, like insects and I hope in time that most of them will buzz off.”

“I see,” replied Rita in a slow voice, but worried voice, wondering if Barone had known about her Animagus form and was basically telling her that he had no problems turning her in to the Ministry. “Exactly who do you have in mind for me to take down, Mr. Barone.”

“Believe me, I have a whole laundry list of people who deserve to be taking down a few pegs,” answered Harry before adding dangerously. “Just remember, I’ll be hovering over you, making sure you know your place and everything remains truthful. Is that understood?”

“Yes,” answered Rita

“Good, so there will be no trouble, or there will be trouble for that,” concluded Harry. “Now, unless there is something else, I have to get to work on the renovation plans for this place”

Rita nodded, not really knowing what to say. Her new boss was an enigma but as long as she got paid, it didn’t matter to her one bit. Plus, she knew of a few in the Ministry that deserved to have their reputation shredded to bits. Now, she was being allowed to be as vicious towards the Ministry as possible. Stretching the truth just added to the intrigue, but Rita had no problem digging deeper to find damaging, concrete facts, especially when her job was hanging in the balance, along with the fact she had a pretty good idea that Barone would stooge her illegal form off to the Ministry without a second thought.

Back at the Ministry, Bartemius Crouch sat in his office looking rather pleased with himself. Bagnold’s health was getting worse with each passing day and many suspected that this year would be her last as Minister of Magic. It was amazing to think that only maybe about seven or eight months ago, Crouch nearly got shunted down towards

the International Department of Magical Cooperation, but the Harry Potter situation involving his Muggle family and Crouch being the integral part of bringing them to justice helped give renaissance to Crouch's career. Before it was almost certain that Cornelius Fudge would get the top job, along with Umbridge gaining more power as well, but now Crouch felt that no one could stop him from securing his rightful place as Minister of Magic.

Sadly, Crouch's good mood was punctured by the untimely rival of Dolores Umbridge, a face that only a mother could love, but only if a copious amount of alcohol were in play.

"Dolores, you seem a bit flustered," said Crouch.

"Flustered doesn't seem the word, my life was just threatened by that infernal mobster!" shrieked Umbridge, causing Crouch to be taken aback.

"You met Barone?" inquired Crouch.

"Yes, that mobster attempted to blow my brains out with a fireleg or whatever those things that those damned Muggles used to attack each other, that shoot those metal things," explained Umbridge. "And that's not the worst thing, that's far from the worst thing."

Crouch just sat silently and waited for Umbridge to elaborate.

"He bought full and complete ownership of the Daily Prophet," added Umbridge which caused Crouch to sit up, looking aback.

"That's not acceptable Dolores, you were to ensure our distribution contract was to be resigned," admonished Crouch.

"I offered the absolute maximum, Crouch, and he refused, willing to sell out to that, mobster," said Umbridge who seemed to be losing her composure. "That ungrateful...if it wasn't for the Ministry, he would be poorer than a Weasley."

"I daresay Barone offered a large amount that we couldn't even imagine to pay," prodded Crouch.

Umbridge just nodded stiffly.

“He demanded a trial for that fugitive, Black, as well,” continued Umbridge. “He threatened that the Wizarding World would suffer a cataclysmic disaster that would make He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named seem like a day in the park.”

“I very much think he’s bluffing Dolores,” responded Crouch. “If we put the entire Ministry against his mob organization, we would wipe them out within seconds.”

“Why not hunt him down and take him out now?” demanded Umbridge.

“Under normal circumstances that would be acceptable, but Harry Potter is with that unstable criminal and even the smallest chance that the Boy-Who-Lived would be killed or severely injured in the crossfire of a Ministry raid is not a chance that anyone is willing to take and Bagnold agrees, it could cause the Wizarding World to fall into utter chaos, especially with the recent Dumbledore fiasco and all those Death Eaters breaking out of Azkaban, before promptly vanishing” explained Crouch. “Still, Black will not receive a trial, and when the Ministry finds him, he is receiving the Dementor’s Kiss.”

“Barone also thinks he has leverage over you, something about a secret that could destroy your life if he chooses to reveal it,” said Umbridge and with that Crouch became absolutely alarmed, but did his best to turn away, not to show it.

“This is just an attempt to force my hand,” said Crouch stiffly, reasoning with himself there could be no way Barone or anyone else could have known about his son. Only Crouch and his house elf, Winky knew about his son being broken out of the house and it shouldn’t have been much of a problem, as Crouch had kept him under the Imperius Curse, keeping him under control. “Anything else.”

“He said you have a week to meet his demands to give Black a trial or else,” informed Umbridge which Crouch scoffed at.

Seconds later, a loud, ear splitting ringing echoed through the Ministry of Magic, causing both Crouch and Umbridge to instinctively

cover their ears as the ringing seemed to only intensive causing the Ministry of Magic to vibrate.

“What was that abomination?” inquired Umbridge and seconds later, a very frazzled looking Ministry official was running around, muttering under his breath outside of Crouch’s office. “What happened?”

“Madam Umbridge, the monitoring charms we had on the Daily Prophet headquarters, someone broke them with a sonic vibration spell,” answered the official in a frantic tone of voice.

“That would have had to have been Barone, but those spells could have been disabled with a simple Finite Incantatem spell,” muttered Umbridge before realizing something. “It’s impossible that he could have neutralized all three monitoring spells.”

“Quite possible in fact, because that’s what he did,” replied the Ministry official before running off as someone yelled at him from down the hallway.

“What now?” barked Crouch as he rose to his feet, before moving through the doorway outside his office and looking around.

“Once the monitoring spells were taken down, whoever did this knocked out the Floo system,” explained the second Ministry official who had arrived on the scene.

“The entire Floo System?” asked Crouch as he waited for confirmation.

“Yes, everything is all out of order and the Floo regulation experts are looking into it, I don’t know when we’ll be able to get everything back on line,” informed the second Ministry official.

Crouch just stood there, wondering if Barone had discovered the monitoring spells and had decided to send a troubling message to the Ministry by reeking havoc with the Floo Network.

“One of you had better inform Minister Bagnold and put the entire Ministry on full alert for any strange characters,” ordered Crouch as he turned, resolving not to fold to Barone’s threats, before addressing

the other Ministry official. "Tell the Floo Network people to step up any and all efforts in fixing everything, or we'll have a lot of angry people on our hands."

Back at headquarters, early the next morning, Harry couldn't help but notice that his godfather seemed extremely amused about something.

"What now Sirius, did Snape finally get the Dementor's Kiss?" asked Harry.

"No, something even better, it appears that someone knocked out the Floo Network, just heard it on the Wizzarding Wireless in fact," said Sirius with a grin. "Now, I don't suppose you know who might have done that, do you Harry?"

"I do wonder, if I put those sonic vibration spells through those spying spells, the vibrations that went through the Ministry caused an influx of rogue magical energy to reverberate through the Ministry of Magic wards thus causing a feedback loop which lead to the Floo Network to be disabled," said Harry.

"Could you please repeat that one time, in English?" suggested Sirius who looked rather lost.

"Accident magic caused by cancelling monitoring spells caused the Floo System to shut down," repeated Harry in a bored voice.

"Ah, gotcha Harry," said Sirius nodding his head.

"I haven't checked in with my employees at the Daily Prophet yet, but I bet the story will be all over the papers, no doubt calling into question the ability for the Ministry to properly run the Floo System," said Harry.

"Should be a barrel of laughs," added Sirius with a grin.

"Have I mentioned how much I hated the Ministry?" questioned Harry.

"Not in a couple of days," responded Sirius before both Sirius and Harry broke out laughing before Harry grew serious.

"I do hope for the sake of the few noble people in the Ministry that they decide to finally give you a proper trial," said Harry evenly.

"What do you have in mind?" asked Sirius.

"Let's just say I managed to work a few little additions into the Ministry of Magic wards when we went there for the Dumbledore trial," remarked Harry cryptically. "Not going to tip my own hand, but if Crouch doesn't cooperate with my warning and give you that trial in six days, the Ministry will be redecorated."

Harry got up to his feet.

"Now, I have a few short pieces of business to attend to before school," said Harry as he pushed open his office door and walked out.

Time passed over the next week but unfortunately for them, the Ministry's incompetence did not. Despite Harry being very clear with his demand that Umbridge warned Crouch about the consequences of not giving Sirius his proper trial, the Ministry had not made the proper steps in doing so. It seemed like they were willing to play hardball so Harry was more than prepared to use a bigger bat to put the Ministry in their place.

On the week anniversary of his warning to the Ministry, all within found out the hard way about what happens when they developed a listening deficiency problem.

A loud siren echoed through the Ministry, causing many employees to jump up and look for the source.

"Good afternoon everyone, for those who don't know me, I am Boss Allan Michael Barone, the current guardian of Harry James Potter, the boy who you seemed to respect above all else, and also, I respect the interests of Sirius Orion Black, a poor soul who has been shunned by all of you, thanks to the rhetoric of the Ministry" echoed the voice of Barone throughout the Ministry. "It has come to my attention that my second client has not been getting the proper respect, despite repeated requests for a trial, under the influence of Veritaserum. Hell, I'll even pay for it to get properly brewed, if you tightwads in the Ministry can't afford one simple request."

Crouch and Bagnold made their way through the Ministry.

“Where is he broadcasting from?” barked Crouch angrily.

“Not from within the Ministry, we’ve double and triple checked identities coming from all entrance points within the Ministry, by your request Crouch,” replied Bagnold in a tired voice, looking about ready to keel over at any second. “We need to evacuate everyone, before he does something drastic, of course, giving Black the trial might be the best option...”

“With all due respect Minister, that would be the worst option, that would be admitting that we can’t handle a simple mobster,” said Crouch before looking around. “Barone, you won’t get the better of me, I know you can here me.”

“Oh I here you, Barty, loud and clear,” echoed the voice throughout the Ministry. “And I know you can here me, so let’s see how long the Ministry can last, when they are cut off from the rest of the world.”

“You’re bluffing, Barone, there is no way you could have blocked all exit points from the Ministry,” challenged Crouch.

“Try me, Barty,” retorted the mysterious voice.

Crouch turned to a pair of Aurors who hung around in the corridor.

“Well don’t just stand there,” barked Crouch angrily. “Make sure everyone finds a way out, this Barone isn’t going to defeat the Ministry.”

“Not going to work,” sang the voice in a mocking fashion and sure enough, after about twenty minutes of intense searching, the two Aurors came back, with several others who looked flustered.

“He’s right, we can’t get out through the Floo, Apparation, or a Portkey,” informed one of the Aurors. “Hell, we even tried to get out through a window like a common Muggle and something blasted us back in.”

“Excellent, now that everyone is here, I’m going to tell a story, unless of course you want to be nice and cooperative, to give Sirius a trial,” said Harry.

“The Ministry of Magic will not fold to your demands,” said Crouch and Bagnold just hung her head in disgust.

“If we can’t get out, we should for Merlin’s sake!” snapped Bagnold, who slumped against the wall, clutching her heart. All this excitement was too much for a woman her age.

“Minister, we’ll find a way, the collective efforts of the entire Ministry of Magic will find a way around whatever he did to the building,” said Crouch in a reassuring voice.

“You should listen to him Minister Bagnold, after all, do remember that eventually the entire Minister of Magic collectively broke Lord Voldemort’s power after countless hours of hard effort,” retorted Barone in a sarcastic voice. “Oh wait, that was a fifteen month old toddler, my mistake.”

“Barone, I will make sure the Dementors have your soul for these crimes,” said Crouch.

“No Barty, they’ll have yours after I tell my story, the one thing that would ruin your career, actually scratch your career, your life,” replied Barone. “Now I’m not like Albus Dumbledore, I’m not some grand chess master, playing a complicated game that makes sense to no one but him. Rather I am rather straight up and blunt, kind of like a beater bat to the skull and the secret will be revealed.”

“You don’t know anything about me, there is no way you can ruin me, Barone,” fired back Crouch in a smug voice.

“Now, ladies, gentlemen, and Umbridge, I’m going to tell you a story, but I can assure you, this isn’t a story about a man named Jed, poor mountaineer that barely kept his family fed,” continued Barone. “This is a story about one of your very own, and a rather interesting cover up, something that shoves what an ass backward hypocrite Bartemius Amadeus Crouch is. Now, gather around children and take a seat on Uncle Al’s knee, to hear a riveting tale.”

Crouch took a step back, resolved that there was no way that Barone could have known this, no way whatsoever.

“Now as you might have remembered, little Barty Crouch Junior, the son of very own Bartemius Crouch decided to join up with everyone’s favorite Dark Lord, Voldemort,” added Barone. “Now perhaps he was just a bad seed out of a good family. Or maybe he had Daddy issues. Maybe he was envious at not getting hugged enough as a child or maybe he felt some rage at his father not attending his Quidditch games as a young lad. Whatever the case may be, he decided to join up with Voldemort, just a few weeks before he had the ultimate out of body experience. Then, Little Barty, decided to go party, as only Death Eaters would but you see if he thought he could, he was surely mistaken, because to the Ministry of Magic he was taken. Caught with Death Eaters, but not just any Death Eaters, as Little Barty Crouch Junior was found in the company of the dangerously insane dark witch bitch Bellatrix Lestrange and her slightly less insane, but still dangerous in their own right, brother in law and husband, Rabastan and Rodolphus.”

The people in the Ministry remained quiet, wondering exactly where Barone was getting at.

“We naturally already know all this,” piped up a Ministry worker.

“Yes my son was a disgrace but it’s all over, he’s dead and buried, good riddance to that traitor” added Crouch curtly.

“I’m not finished yet, rather this is the part where it gets rather juicy, as Little Barty, along with his newly found Death Eater chums, were put on trial, rather interesting considering that the three Lestranges in particular killed many more people than Sirius was alleged to and yet they got a trial,” said Barone in a somber voice. “They were convicted, sent to Azkaban, many tears were shed by the poor Little Barty’s mother, perhaps wondering where she went wrong in her raising of her son and she fell into very ill health. The story from her, you know that both Bartemius’s wife and son died almost a year after this fiasco, but the story doesn’t end here. You see just a few days prior to Barty Junior being found dead, Crouch was authorized a visit to the Ministry with his wife, perhaps to gain closure as his wife was very close to

dying as well and a last minute favor. Interesting enough the favor extended far beyond just a simple visit and what I'm about to reveal to you is that Barty Crouch Junior was..."

"Barone, I've changed my mind, I will give that fugitive Black a fair trial, under Veritaserum!" ejaculated Crouch, causing many people nearby to look queerly at him for his unexpected outburst. "Ten AM, in the main courtroom on Monday morning sound like a fair venue, Minister."

"It's what I've been saying all along and I will officially make the trial officially, but the outcome of Black rests on the decision of the Wizengamot," said Bagnold in a tired voice.

"I realize that," replied Barone.

"If Black is judged to be innocent, then he will get his freedom, along with a full apology," added Bagnold.

"And when he is judged guilty, both of you are going to receiving the Dementor's Kiss!" added Crouch, who looked completely mad.

"Fair enough, but a word of warning, if I hint any attempt to shift the outcome unfairly, I will finish my story, Crouch," concluded Barone. "Now, you are free to leave, see you Monday."

Another shrill siren echoed, signaling the disappearance of the voice of Allan Micheal Barone.

Crouch turned around, before storming off, looking rather agitated and he would find out exactly how Barone managed to find a way to manipulate the wards surrounding the Ministry. He was an independent thinker, always something that the Ministry generally frowned upon.

Yaxley walked down the corridor to the Dark Lord's quarters. While most of the other Death Eaters were working on very important project that would make the Dark Lord more powerful then ever and thus increase the chances of them getting power, Yaxley had a different job, gathering much information as possible on the mysterious mobster guardian of the Boy-Who-Lived. A search that

had turned up little to nothing of value, but he was required to check in monthly with the Dark Lord on his minimal progress.

After the events of an hour ago at the Ministry, it seemed rather appropriate that Yaxley make his report to the Dark Lord at this moment.

“Enter,” prompted Voldemort in a calm, quiet voice, before Yaxley could even knock on the door. The door swung up on its own accord and Yaxley knelt down before the Dark Lord, awaiting acknowledgement. “Speak, Yaxley.”

“My Lord, I found no further information about Barone as of yet other than what we know, but I did find something interesting about a connection that Harry Potter has through the mafia through his mother’s side of the family,” stated Yaxley. “His grandfather was a key mob boss for several years and the Mudblood was slated to take over before you disposed of her and James Potter.”

“Interesting, tell me Yaxley, do you draw any interesting conclusions based on this?” commanded Voldemort.

“My lord, it is possible that this Barone is a freelance mafia enforcer, who just happens to be a wizard, brought in for the express purpose of grooming Harry Potter to take over the criminal organization later on in life, along with giving him a jump start on magical training” supplied Yaxley. “However, numerous leads have sparked dead ends and I can’t find one piece of evidence to support the fact that this Barone even exists.”

“He did mention that he was known by many aliases during the Dumbledore trial,” prompted Voldemort calmly.

“That he did but there is something else you may find of interest my lord,” said Yaxley, pausing as the Dark Lord looked up with interest. “Barone had given a warning to the Ministry to give Sirius Black a trial, but Crouch convinced others to continue to deny Black the trial. That wasn’t the best idea, as Barone had found some way to manipulate the Ministry of Magic wards to prevent everyone from leaving and what’s rather curious, he planned to do it from the outside.”

Voldemort looked at Yaxley for a minute, rubbing his chin in thought.

“Step up your efforts, Yaxley, Barone will join us and by extension, Harry Potter,” said Voldemort after a good, long pause and the truth was that the Dark Lord needed one component from Harry Potter when he completed his new body. Potter’s blood, the Dark Lord believed, held the secret of why he was defeated in the first place and with that added component, Lord Voldemort would truly be invincible and unlike Voldemort’s original plan to gaining a new body, it would not matter if it was taken by force or willingly given. “Is that all you have to report to me, Yaxley?”

“Yes, my Lord,” replied Yaxley with a nod.

“Then depart,” hissed Voldemort and Yaxley wasted little time in departing, leaving the Dark Lord to sit alone in his preferred atmosphere of darkness and solitude.

Monday had come and so had the trial, the members of the Wizengamot having filed in to prepare for the trial of Sirius Black, but many of them curiously regarded Crouch, as they wondered what Barone could have potentially said that caused him to change his tune about Black receiving a trial. Whatever it was Crouch wasn’t speaking about it.

Five minutes before the trial began, Harry, under the guise of Barone, walked in with several armed bodyguards and right behind them, Sirius, who had an unreadable look on his face as he was dressed in brand new robes and looked rather well groomed. Once he saw Crouch, Sirius’s eyes rested on him with utter contempt.

“Your wand, Barone,” commanded Crouch.

“Why, so you can slap a tracking spell on it?” challenged Harry and Crouch raised his wand. “Didn’t you learn anything from the Dumbledore trial? Once again I’ve made it so that no one can use any magic in this courtroom but me.”

Crouch stepped forward, the urge to wrap his fingers around Barone’s throat and strangle him the Muggle way sounding very

appealing, even if he was willing to risk being filled with holes from Barone's bodyguards.

"Try it and I'll bite your fingers off, old man," hissed Vinny as the snake poked his fingers out in sleeve of Harry's robes.

"That's a snake Barone," commented Crouch.

"Really, and here all this time I thought it was a worm on steroids," answered Harry sarcastically. "No, seriously, it's cool, he's my familiar, don't worry, he doesn't bite...unless you do something to make me angry and then you're really taking your chances."

"A snake as your familiar, you fool, serpents are the mark of dark wizards," said a Wizengamot member. "We should just give him the kiss right now."

"You know if stupidity was an unforgivable crime, most of the Ministry would receive the Dementor's Kiss," remarked Vinny and Harry nodded in agreement.

"If we may, I'd like to proceed with why we're here in the first place," said Harry as he looked around.

"Yes, Mr. Barone that would be most acceptable, this is a courtroom, not a circus, Bartemius," said Madam Bones as she glanced coolly at Crouch who decided that it would be wise to just shut up and sit there stewing. "Now I knew you would not find it acceptable otherwise, so I must inform you that I personally had the Veritaserum for this trial tested by three accredited neutral Potions masters and they found it to be a rather foolproof batch, with a ninety nine percent certainty of telling the truth."

"Madam Bones, I thank you for ensuring Sirius to the chance to tell the proper truth," said Harry and a ministry official with stringy grey hair walked up with the Veritaserum to administer it to Sirius.

"Open your mouth, Mr. Black," commanded the Ministry official and Sirius obeyed, as the official placed three drops on Sirius's tongue.

"The Veritaserum will take effect within the next minute or so, so let's allow this trial to officially begin," said Madam Bones in a business like tone. "Interrogators for this trial of Sirius Orion Black are Bartemius Amadeus Crouch, Minister Millicent Annabelle Bagnold, Robert Anthony Yaxley, and Amelia Susan Bones. The witnesses for the defense will be Allan Michael Barone."

"The Veritaserum should be taken effect, Madam Bones," prompted the Ministry official as he stood by Sirius.

"Let's make sure though," said Yaxley as he rose to his feet and his eyes lingered on Barone for a second, before he turned to Black. "What is your full name?"

"Sirius Orion Black," answered Sirius promptly.

"What is your opinion of Severus Snape?" inquired Harry before Yaxley could ask the next question.

"I think he is greasy pathetic man with no redeeming qualities," replied Sirius.

"Well it works," said Harry.

"Did you cause Lily and James Potter's deaths?" barked Crouch.

"Objection, leading the defense," said Harry who knew that Sirius did feel partially that he caused the deaths of Lily and James, because he suggested the change to Pettigrew.

"Yes Crouch, please do not attempt to influence Mr. Black," said Madam Bones.

"Very well, what role if any did you have in the deaths of James and Lily Potter?" inquired Crouch but Harry placed a silencing charm on Sirius before he said anything.

"Fair trial my arse," muttered Harry before turning Madam Bones. "Permission to take part of the interrogation of Sirius Black."

"This is highly unorthodox, but as long as you keep in the scope of relevance, I see no problem with it, Mr. Barone," said Madam Bones.

Harry dropped the silence charm.

"Who was the Secret Keeper for James and Lily Potter?" asked Harry.

"Peter Pettigrew," replied Sirius.

"So, you did not betray the whereabouts of the Potters to Lord Voldemort?" added Harry.

"No, I would never do that," said Sirius.

"Very well, did you take part of the murder of Peter Pettigrew and twelve Muggles?" asked Harry

"No," responded Sirius.

"Tell us what happened," prodded Harry.

"I had intended to kill the traitorous little rat, but Peter got the better of me," answered Sirius and even in the Veritaserum induced haze, a little bitterness shined through. "He shouted lies about a betrayal to Lily and James, before he blew up a gas pipe underneath the street and sped down with the rest of the vermin in the sewer. I don't doubt he intended to kill me as well in the explosion, but I was able to put up a strong shield charm to avoid the backlash of explosion."

Harry turned to look at the court members who looked at Crouch.

"Now I have a question for you, Bartemius, exactly we know that you took Dumbledore's word but I want to know the reason why," said Harry.

"Dumbledore promised me that he would do everything in his power to make me Minister of Magic if I just put Black in Azkaban, in retrospect, I believe that Dumbledore thought that Black would be an obstacle to his attempts to put Potter with the Dursleys," said Crouch. "Of course, Dumbledore wouldn't give me the time of day once my

son was found with the Death Eaters, he viewed me as damaged goods and decided that Cornelius Fudge would be a better pawn.”

“Very good Bartemius, but you see, those who follow Dumbledore blindly don’t get the slightest bit of sympathy with me,” retorted Harry coldly and Madam Bones cleared her throat, before turning to the other members of the Wizengamot.

“I feel we have heard a sufficient amount of evidence to put the future of Sirius Black to a vote,” said Madam Bones. “All those in favor of allowing Mr. Black to be walk out of here a free man.”

Most of the Wizengamot raised their hands, over half at least and Harry smugly nodded looking at Crouch and Harry couldn’t help but notice two others looked smug at Crouch’s slow descent back into disgrace. Two others who Harry planned for formulate a suitable punishment for because of their crimes against him the first time around.

“All those in favor of giving Misters Black and Barone the Dementor’s Kiss,” said Madam Bones, following official protocol, but only Crouch and a few others raised their hands. “Very well, Sirius Black, you are free to go and on behalf of the Ministry of Magic, I would like to apologize for you not receiving a proper trial nearly six years ago.”

“I would as well,” said Minister Bagnold weakly and Crouch sat there, looking rather put off, but said nothing as Sirius sarcastically waved at him with a cheery expression on his face and for good reason, he could walk the streets freely without worry of having his soul sucked out.

“I need to apologize for something as well, as it was rude of me not to finish my story the other day at the Ministry,” interjected Harry and Crouch seemed petrified on the spot, unable to do anything to stop Harry from continuing. “Barty Crouch Junior is still alive, at his father’s house, held under the Imperius Curse, he switched places with his mother during that last visit Azkaban under the Polyjuice potion. She’s buried in the walls of Azkaban under her son’s appearance and the grave for Mrs. Crouch is empty. Have a nice day!”

Chapter Fifteen: Twists and Turns:

Scandal Pulverizes the Ministry of Magic:

Bartemius Crouch Senior Arrested For Orchestrating Son's Death and Keeping Still Alive Son Under the Imperius Curse:

By Rita Skeeter:

Yesterday morning, Sirius Black received his long awaited trial and was cleared of all charges (see page eight for full story). On a normal day this would be front page news, but an even bigger story than an innocent man finally getting his freedom after being falsely branded as a fugitive broke. Indeed, Allan Michael Barone, the official spokesperson for both Sirius Black and Harry Potter, informed a full Wizengamot court that Bartemius Crouch's son, Bartemius Crouch Junior still lived. Due to the use of a Polyjuice potion, Crouch's dying wife switched places with the younger Bartemius Crouch. She died bearing his appearance, with Crouch subsequently faking his wife's death. That grave is empty.

After making this statement, Barone and Black, along with Barone's bodyguards left, missing in this reporter's opinion to be the most chaotic scene in the Ministry of Magic. Crouch attempted to make a break for it, but that didn't work out as planned. After a short, but intense fight, Ministry Aurors subdued Bartemius Crouch Senior and as a result, Crouch was sent straight to Azkaban prison.

With the elder Crouch detained, Aurors paid a visit to the Crouch Residence to look for the younger Crouch. After nearly an hour of searching, Bartemius Crouch Junior was found hidden under an Imperius Curse, his brain completely addled from being under an extremely powerful Imperius Curse for extensive periods of time. Early reports state that the younger Crouch is being kept in a warded, heavily guarded wing of Azkaban, with around the clock medical treatment being provided. In time, the damage that Crouch Senior did to his son may be reversed and then Crouch Junior will moved into the main Azkaban area, with the rest of the prisoners.

In perhaps a rather interesting twist of irony, Bartemius Crouch Senior will not receive a trial for his crimes, but rather be locked in Azkaban for the rest of his life in the cell that Sirius Black once resided in, with a similar amount of security around the cell.

The article went out in the Daily Prophet for everyone in the Wizarding World to see and naturally it didn't paint Crouch in a good light. In fact, the entire Ministry of Magic received scathing letters for allowing one of their top employees to smuggle his Death Eater son out of Azkaban and use a very powerful Unforgivable curse to subdue him. It got them thinking about what else the Ministry might be covering up.

Never mind the fact that no one in the Ministry knew this happened besides Crouch, but naturally they couldn't release a statement in the Daily Prophet, because now they weren't sure where it was located anymore. The fact that Barone owned the Daily Prophet and didn't seem to be too fond of the Ministry spelled disaster for their public image. He never printed one false word, but he managed to dig up truthful accounts of Ministry incompetence that shook the foundation of the Ministry. Many feared that the unraveling had just begun, but few knew exactly why Barone had this vendetta against the Ministry. It couldn't have been just about Black, it had to run deeper than that.

Despite the fact that the brunt of the scathing letters were directed towards the entire Ministry of Magic, everyone from the lowest worker on the totem pole all the way up to the Minister of Magic felt the repercussions. Most of the employees felt they had to walk around on eggshells to prevent from provoking the wrath of those hire up. Their very jobs hung in the balance.

Arthur Weasley was no exception to this rule. A meager employee at the Ministry, he was always the subject to much ridicule behind his back due to his fascination with Muggles. The truth was he found the ways Muggles had managed without magic to be rather interesting and was worth study. So much through that he took several Muggle artifacts home and took them apart to see how they worked, before magically putting them back together. It was technically against the law, as using magic on any kind of Muggle items for what ever reason.

However, since Arthur worked in the Misuse of Muggle Artifacts Office, he knew a couple loopholes that he could use to continue his hobby without breaking the law.

Arthur arrived home just an hour before his wife usually served dinner. Sure enough as he walked inside, he saw Molly working busily in the kitchen. The sounds in the distance indicated that his four youngest were playing in the background, Percy no doubt upstairs in his room reading a book.

“Oh, Arthur, you’re home,” said Molly in a distracted voice. “The Crouch situation must be bad if the Prophet is truthful.”

“For once it is and that’s the disturbing thing,” admitted Arthur. “He’s in Azkaban, no chance of a trial, his son’s brain is rather scrambled, he’s basically insane from prolonged exposure to the Imperius Curse. The entire Ministry is in chaos.”

“Barone couldn’t have just released information to the Ministry, he just had to make a public spectacle of it,” said Molly in an agitated voice. “Arthur, I do hope the Ministry’s doing something about him, anyone who could bend the entire Ministry to their will and take control of the wards has to be dangerous. And that poor boy, being raised by someone like him, he’s an obvious dark wizard.”

“To be honest, he’s left no traces behind on how he took control of the Ministry, so there’s no way to find out how Barone took control and prevent him from doing it again,” remarked Arthur calmly. “To be honest, I’m not quite sure Barone is a dark wizard...”

“Arthur, don’t be naïve,” said Molly angrily. “Of course he’s a dark wizard, those malicious lies he spread about Dumbledore during that trial, he got him discredited, and ruined his life. Obviously didn’t want him in the way, now did he.”

“Dumbledore disregarded...” started Arthur.

“Yes, I know, I’ve heard about the will or the alleged will,” said Molly. “I doubt that Dumbledore would maliciously put any child in harm, otherwise wouldn’t have someone found him to be unfit to teach them by now? Barone must have had the resources to falsify a document.”

Arthur sighed. It would be a waste of breath to tell his wife that even You-Know-Who himself couldn’t have falsified a document that was

checked by the goblins for accuracy. He loved his wife but sometimes she could be so set in her opinions it was be rather frustrating.

“FRED, GEORGE, GIVE ME MY DOLL!”

In the backyard behind the Burrow, little Ginny Weasley was absolutely furious beyond belief. Her two twin brothers, Fred and George, had decided to take it upon themselves to take her prized possession, a small ragged doll that her mother had bought from a second hand store for her third birthday.

In theory, the doll was supposed to be a Harry Potter doll, but it looked just like a generic little boy with a lightning bolt scar, nothing like the real Harry Potter with its brown hair and blue eyes. It was just one of the many products made to con gullible people out of a few galleons who would want it just because it had to do with Harry Potter.

“Now, Ginny, poor Harry here looks a bit ragged,” said George as he took the doll and looked it over. Ginny moved forward but Fred had tossed the doll over her head, where his twin caught it.

“Yes, it must be boring just spending the entire day with you,” added Fred.

“With all the tea parties and all that,” continued George as Fred had tossed the doll to George as Ginny made a movement.

“A step down for someone who vaporized You-Know-Who,” concluded Fred and the five year old girl had lost her patience, with a burst of accidental magic sending Fred flying backwards and the doll flew right into Ginny’s hands.

“Now, Ginny, that’s not becoming of a young lady,” admonished George in a playful voice.

“What would the real Harry Potter if he meets you and finds out you like to beat up boys for fun?” asked Fred and Ginny went scarlet at the thought of actually meeting the Boy-Who-Lived.

“Don’t see what the big deal is about a stupid doll,” remarked Ron who had been watching the show from a safe distance.

"Says the person who's been saving their pocket money for two years to get the limited addition Harry Potter versus You-Know Who doll set," replied Ginny.

"Hey, Ginny, they're not dolls, they're action figures with fourteen points of articulation," argued Ron.

"Right," chorused Fred and George in unison sarcastically.

"Well they are," said Ron in a stubborn voice before hastily chasing the subject. "Let's play some Quidditch before dinner shall we."

"That sounds great," said George as Fred nodded and Ginny took a step forward but Ron glared at her.

"Ginny, you know you can't play," said Ron.

"Because I'm a girl, right," muttered Ginny darkly.

"Yes, girls aren't allowed to play Quidditch because they could contaminate our broomsticks with their cooties," said Fred.

"At least they can't until they get their cootie vaccine during their first year at Hogwarts," added George.

Ginny walked off.

"C'mon Harry, we don't need these idiots to have fun," muttered Ginny to her doll as she walked into the house, clutching the doll fondly before she headed up to her room before dinner.

Edward Zabini's head jerked up, as two of his men entered the office.

"Shut the door behind you!" snapped Boss Zabini in a frantic voice, and the mobsters hastened to do so. "Did anyone follow you two here?"

"No boss, pretty sure they didn't," answered one of the mobsters as the second one nodded dumbly by his side.

"Are you sure?" asked Zabini.

“Yes, yes, we’re sure,” said the second mobster. “Boss, you seem to be a bit jumpy today.”

“Jumpy, jump, how dare you jump to conclusions!” cried Zabini, as he pushed his chair towards the wall, so he didn’t have his back towards his men or to the wall. “My wife could kill me at any moment, and you two are treating this like a joke.”

The two mobsters exchanged uneasy looks.

“Boss, you always say your wife wants to kill you but she hasn’t yet,” replied one of the mobsters in a brave voice.

It’s different today, different you mugs, because listen up, it’s like this see,” responded Zabini in a frantic voice. “Sirius Black was cleared of all charges yesterday.”

“You mean that notorious mass murderer who is all over the news?” inquired one of the mobsters.

“No, the guy who picks up other men when he’s dressed like a nun,” fired back Zabini sarcastically. “Of course the notorious mass murder, you goons. My rival, that no good Boss Barone got him freed, the Ministry of Magic had no choice and Bartemius Crouch was lucky enough not to get whacked. It’s only a matter of time before Adrianna decides that I have a little accident and decides to move onto this Black guy.”

“But Boss, what makes you think that your wife wants to knock you off to run off with his black guy this Black guy?” asked one of the mobsters.

Zabini sighed, this is what he got for hiring people who never finished school.

“Listen closely, it’s very simple, that even you two could understand it,” answered Zabini before dropping his voice to a near whisper. “He’s fucking rich.”

The mobsters nodded and Zabini spun around, before he looked around the window.

“Something out there,” said Zabini in a paranoid voice. “Check it out, check it out!”

The two mobsters sighed, both wondering if the money they were receiving was really worth it but they looked out the window.

“It’s just a squirrel Boss Zabini,” answered one of the mobsters slowly.

“Is it really?” asked Zabini as he looked around wildly from side to side. “My wife could have stuffed it with explosives to do me in for all I know. She would do something like that.”

“Boss Zabini, why not take care of your wife before she takes care of you?” suggested one of the mobsters.

“Yes I could kill her but then I’d get both the Muggle and Magical authorities on my case,” answered Zabini. “If she kills me, then everyone would put it down as a tragic accident. However, if I kill her, then I’m guilty until proven innocent. That’s how the law really works.”

The mobsters nodded calmly and Zabini sat rigid.

“Ticking, something’s ticking,” muttered Zabini as he looked over towards the wrist watch from one of his men. He took it.

“Boss Zabini, what gives?” asked the mobster but Zabini took his wand before he ripped the watch apart, destroying it beyond repair. “Hey, my dead father gave me that watch.”

“Well it could have been a bomb that could have killed me and worse, caused expensive damage to my office,” replied Zabini brooding tone. “She could kill me at any time, but she’s making me sweat it, thinks she can fake me out.”

Zabini looked around, a wild look in his eyes.

“Adrianna you think you can get me, like you got your other six husbands, well I’ll show you,” muttered Zabini wildly. “You can’t get me, no bitch can get the better of Boss Edward Zabini, is that clear?”

“Yes, of course, Boss Zabini,” chorused the two yes-men mobsters in unison.

“Stop patronizing me, you twits!” snapped Zabini angrily.

“Of course, Boss Zabini, anything you say, boss,” answered the mobsters.

“Listen, I’ve been having a bad year and my wife could kill me at any time, Barone has cut my profits in half, but I will not go down without a fight,” continued Zabini in a manic voice. “I am Edward Zabini, one of the premier crime lords in all of Britain, I will make everyone fear my might, I will cripple everyone into submission. Listen here you mugs, spread the word, I’m going to be ruthless, cold, and uncaring, everything that a businessman should be. I will run my competitors out of business, right to the morgue. Nothing can get in my way.”

“DADDY!” called the voice of Blaise from the stairway “Are you up here?”

From the outside, Blaise knocked on the door and the two mobsters became rigid.

“Don’t just stand there, let my daughter in!” ordered Zabini.

“I don’t know, it could be a plot to kill you boss,” suggested one of the mobsters.

“Are you trying to tell me that my own daughter would kill me?” asked Zabini in a dangerous voice. “I ought you have you busted down to scrubbing toilets, now let her in before I decide to redecorate the walls with your brains.”

With that, Zabini’s men made haste to open the door and Blaise walked in, with a smirk on her face. The seven year old girl walked in, ignoring the two mobsters, before she sat down in front of her father’s desk.

“What is it, princess, I’m on a very tight schedule?” asked Boss Zabini.

"Daddy, you could do me a favor and take me shopping, I need some new clothes," replied Blaise.

"What about your mother?" asked Boss Zabini.

"She doesn't know anything, she makes me get boy clothes all the time," replied Blaise, a bit of mild irritation evident in her voice. "Plus, she's been in the Potions lab every time I come home and she's locked me out, she won't talk to anyone. If it wasn't for our house elf, I couldn't eat anything."

Boss Zabini sighed, his wife had wanted a son and had always cut Blaise's hair short when she was younger and dressed her in boy clothes. Hair growth charms cast by Zabini, passed off as accidental magic, put a stop to the hair cutting thing.

"Okay, this weekend, but Daddy's really busy right now," replied Boss Zabini. "I promise, I'll have some time this weekend."

"Okay," answered Blaise in a sweet, mostly innocent voice. "Oh and before I forget, I might have committed a bit of accidental magic today at school."

"So, I suppose I have to go to the school and meet with someone," replied Boss Zabini.

"Actually I didn't, it seems as if Gillworth forgot about accidentally hanging his niece upside down from a lightpost," said Blaise. "She's making fun of Harry and Hermione for actually studying to make sure they did well in school."

"Wait a minute, Blaise, Harry and Hermione, as in you finally made friends," answered Boss Zabini.

"Yes surprising enough, after I swore I would hate everything about that Muggle School that you made me go to, Dad," replied Blaise.

"Now, Blaise, I was hoping that you would be tolerant against Muggles and not take your mother's attitude about them," admonished Boss Zabini. "That's why I sent you to that school."

“I’m ahead of most of them because of the home schooling I got until last year,” replied Blaise, as it was custom in most of the older pureblood families to home school their children starting at the age of three years old. “Still, Harry’s not what you would expect, he’s actually pretty smart and not an arrogant prat like most would expect the Boy-Who-Lived to me.”

Edward Zabini had taken a drink just seconds ago and had spit out onto his desk when he had heard the words “Boy-Who-Lived”.

“Wait a minute, Harry, as in Harry Potter,” stated Boss Zabini, as conflicting emotions ran through his mind. “The Harry Potter.”

“Yes, Daddy, that Harry Potter,” replied Blaise. “I can try and get you his autograph if you want me to.”

“No, no, nothing like that,” said Boss Zabini quickly. “Blaise, I must insist that you be careful, as you do know that Harry Potter’s current guardian is Allan Michael Barone.”

“Who?” asked Blaise.

“My fiercest business rival,” elaborated Boss Zabini, as he looked at his daughter seriously. “I might be paranoid, but there is a strong chance that he could be using young Mr. Potter to get close to you, to gain information on me.”

“Daddy, I really don’t care about your work,” answered Blaise stubbornly.

“I know, but you might someday, when you have to carry on in my place when you’re older,” said Boss Zabini. “Plus this Barone doesn’t know of your lack of interest regarding the mafia..”

“What if this isn’t about you?” pleaded Blaise stubbornly.

“Just be careful, I don’t want to see my only daughter get hurt,” said Boss Zabini. “I doubt that Harry Potter would be in on it, he’s only six years old, it’s not like he’s going to be taking over the family business any time soon. Still, Barone’s grooming him to be the eventual

successor and Barone's a dangerously cunning foe, he brought the Ministry of Magic to its knees."

"Okay, I'll be careful, but I don't think it's a problem," replied Blaise. "So, you're going to take me shopping on Saturday, just the two of us, father daughter stuff, no mobster things either."

"Yes, of course, princess," said Edward in a tired, defeated tone,

"And please, get some rest, you look like you haven't slept in months," added Blaise as she exited the office as the two mobsters in his office looked at Boss Zabini, barely able to keep a straight face.

"What is it that amuses you two?" demanded Boss Zabini.

"Nothing boss," replied one of the mobsters quickly. "It's just that..."

"You've think I've gone soft, because of my daughter, haven't you?" asked Zabini coldly.

"No, of course not, boss, we would never."

"Good, because I'm not soft by any means, Barone is not going to get the better of me, capice," said Zabini and his two mobsters looked confused. "You understand?"

"Everything but capice," replied one of the mobsters.

In his mob headquarters, Harry arrived to check to see if he had any outstanding business that he needed to take care of, before he went over to Hermione's house to work on her Occlumency training which was coming on a bit better than Harry could have ever expected, but a lot of work was to be done for Harry to feel comfortable with letting his best friend in on the truth.

Harry made his way up to the front desk where Antonio was filing paperwork.

"Antonio, any pressing matters that I need to know about for today," replied Harry.

“Other than getting the latest financial reports from your businesses, it’s been a slow day, a few people paid up their debts and we’re tracking down a runner, but that shouldn’t be much of a problem right yet for you until our people track him down,” said Antonio.

“Excellent, how are the businesses doing?” asked Harry

“All profit in all ends, no money losing divisions at all,” informed Antonio. “A far cry from where we were this time last year.”

Harry turned his head to smirk. He wouldn’t want to toot his own horn, but his determination to build an empire to properly compact Voldemort and his Death Eaters, along with the Ministry of Magic

Without another word, Harry made his way upstairs to check in with Sirius in his room in the upper portion of the headquarters. Harry walked up before he knocked on Sirius’s room and Sirius walked up, looking as if he had just gotten out of bed.

“Oh hello Harry, don’t you have to go to school soon?” asked Sirius.

“I’ve been there and went,” replied Harry.

“Merlin, I must have been celebrating my recent freedom a bit too hard last night,” said Sirius.

“Then I guess you didn’t see the Daily Prophet,” remarked Harry and Sirius shook his head. “Well to make a long tedious story a short, rather amusing story, Crouch was chucked into your old cell at Azkaban without a trial.”

Sirius laughed madly at the very thought of poetic justice being served at the Ministry.

“Oh that’s too good, serves Crouch right for attempting to play games with you,” said Sirius. “Still, I bet the Ministry is steamed that you decided to go back on your deal.”

“I said if you didn’t get your trial in forty eight hours, I would finish my story,” said Harry. “They took forty eight hours, nine minutes, and twelve seconds to give you your trial. So technically I didn’t lie.”

"No, I guess you didn't, but don't expect the Ministry to follow the same logic," cautioned Sirius. "With Crouch out, Fudge and Umbridge will be your biggest opposition."

"I can handle Fudge well enough, if he tries anything, I'll cut him off at the knees and bury him in cement," answered Harry coolly. "Umbridge on the other hand, is very influential for someone with her distinct personality flaws. What she lacks in magical power, she makes up in ruthlessness against those who look to be opposing her. She managed to stay in power in the Ministry in the other timeline for quite sometime. She may be a bit more of a challenge to neutralize than Fudge, but what's life without a few challenges."

Harry paused for a few seconds.

"Still, I will come up with a fate worth of someone like Umbridge," added Harry. "School was rather entertaining today, considering that Evelyn got her just desserts."

"Really, from what you've told me about her, she would get along real great with my dear old mother with her smug superior attitude, of course if she wasn't a Muggle," said Sirius. "So, what did you do to her?"

"Me, I didn't do anything, I don't use my powers to terrorize other children, just Ministry officials," replied Harry innocently. "Seriously, Sirius, I believe it was Blaise Zabini who Evelyn caught at a bad moment and the next thing Hermione and I knew, she was suspended on upside down from the nearest light post. Needless to say, Gillworth wasn't too happy, but considering the fact I didn't want the Ministry of Magic's attention to be drawn towards the school, I might have modified his memory and masked all traces of magic."

"I suppose you've done that before," said Sirius.

"Merlin, no, Hermione did in the other timeline. That was the first time," answered Harry. "Erasing memories that is, I've masked magic traces before, when I was on the run from Voldemort and his Death Eaters."

“Harry, I don’t mean to sound like Moony, but I guess I should, as your godfather and a semi-responsible adult figure, well in theory anyway, say that modifying memories without knowing exactly what you’re doing, blah, blah, brain damage, lecture, lecture, nag, nag,” replied Sirius before he laughed, now that he had done his own responsible deed for one day.

“Gillworth will be fine, he was a bit loopy for the rest of the day, but I had to make him forget something big after all,” said Harry.

“Yes, and this Blaise girl, she’s your sworn business rival’s daughter, which as your godfather, I should caution you about consorting with someone who could easily turn around and kill you when you’re older if she decides to follow in her father’s footsteps,” answered Sirius. “But also as your godfather, it is my sworn duty to give you a hard time about any girl that you even have the most remote amount of interaction with.”

“Sirius, we are six and seven years old,” admonished Harry.

“Never stopped the Egyptian magical people,” remarked Sirius.

“That’s not the point and besides, there’s a bit of a morality issue about me having anything beyond friendship with anyone my physical age, due to my unique circumstances,” said Harry calmly.

“Morality issues, you sound like Lily right there,” muttered Sirius underneath his breath before clearing his throat as Harry narrowed his eyes, like Lily used to do before she got mad. “I mean, great Harry, remain strong in your convictions, don’t let your old dog of a godfather sway you towards any debauchery.”

“That’s what I though you said,” said Harry. “Thankfully I have about six or seven before the inevitable internal battle between my hormonally crazed teenage self and my morally restricted older self. That’s when the real fun of having two conflicting presences in my body begins. The younger self is easy to suppress right now, but when I hit the teenage years...”

“I get to really fulfill my obligation of godfather by giving you guidance,” concluded Sirius.

“Yes, I can just image what your type of guidance would be Sirius,” remarked Harry. “Now, I must be off to Hermione’s to continue with her training.”

“Okay, see you later Harry,” replied Sirius as Harry walked off. Now that he was free, Sirius didn’t quite know what to do with his time.

Time passed rather well over the next month and a half or so, leading to the final day before summer vacation for Harry and Hermione. It was also a glorious day, as it would be the last day that they would be in the presence of Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire, as they would move up to a different year and a different teacher.

Harry could almost hear the choir of angels singing in his head but Gillworth was no doubt ready to make a lasting impression on his students.

“Children, this is the last time many of us will be meeting,” announced Gillworth at the beginning of class. “Indeed, I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire, will no longer be your teacher as I have a brand new batch of inept children to teach next year. Now I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire, will miss very few of you.”

Gillworth looked at his many students.

“Let’s see, too ugly, too fat, too short, nose is crooked, do something, anything with that hair,” continued Gillworth as he moved down the row before reaching Evelyn. “Perfect in everyway, a model student in this class, and a product of the teaching of Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire.”

“Thank you Uncle Remy er I mean Professor,” said Evelyn pompously, as she looked around, as the other students applauded a bit robotically.

“I wonder if our report cards come with air sick bags,” whispered Harry in an undertone to Hermione, whose lip twitched, in an attempt not to giggle.

"Now, Mr. Potter and Miss Granger, our two troublemaker students," answered Gillworth. "Potter, let me make it one thing perfect..."

"Remy, I do have a snake here," said Harry and Vinny the snake was currently asleep, wrapped around Harry's shoulders, underneath his shirt.

"Yes, Potter, I know, believe me I do," replied Gillworth in a very forced voice. "You think you're very clever don't you, Potter, exploiting my fears for your own gain."

"I think it's hilarious," answered Harry.

"Potter, not all teachers have a fear of snakes like I do and you will not be able to use your little friend next year to condition a teacher into fear," retorted Gillworth. "Then perhaps yourself and Miss Granger will be exposed as the cheaters you are."

"We'll see Gillworth, we'll see," said Harry in a bored voice. "The fact remains that our report card grades were tabulated by a third party source, so any grades we got were earned fairly."

Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire stared at Harry with pure venom. It was true, the Headmistress didn't trust him to be able to fairly calculate his own grades, so she had a third party do so.

"Of course, if you are so certain of your teaching methods, then I daresay you would have no problem letting comparing your prized student's performance to myself or Hermione's," added Harry.

"Fine you infernal brat!" snapped Gillworth as he bent over towards his desk, before picking up three envelopes containing the final grades for Harry, Hermione, and Evelyn. Without another word, he ripped open Evelyn's envelope and began to read with a crestfallen look on his face.

"See, I bet you even Professor Gillworth didn't expect me to do this good, he's shocked," bragged Evelyn pompously as Gillworth numbly dropped the paper at his niece's desk. She took it and became angry as she read it. "What, it says I'm going to have to do this year again because I failed everything!"

Hermione and Harry exchanged smirks.

"You two, you did this!" wailed Evelyn, her face turning beet red as she pointed her finger at them. "Uncle Remy, you have to pass me, this isn't fair!"

"Now, I'm certain it would be mean and degrading to do this right now, but may we see our grades, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire?" asked Harry.

Gillworth shoved the papers at Harry and Hermione, with disdain etched on his face. The two friends exchanged nods.

"Perfect Outstanding Grades," read Hermione. "Tied first in the year in fact. What about you Harry?"

"Same thing," confirmed Harry. "Now, Professor, for my own grade on you, you fail."

Gillworth's eye twitched, wishing the Headmistress hadn't banned use of the "board of education", because this brat was asking for it. He opted to bend down, so he was nearly in Harry's face.

"I hate you," whispered Gillworth.

"Somehow I don't think Harry's going to be too upset about that," replied Hermione and at least half of the other students laughed, which caused Evelyn to glare at them.

"Hey, we're not going to be in this class much longer," remarked one of the boys, shrugging his shoulders.

"Still, I should perhaps thank Professor Gillworth for his...efforts in teaching me and Hermione this year," said Harry as he casually waved his wand and Gillworth's desk turned into about three dozen snakes. Gillworth turned around and leapt backwards.

"SNAKES!" yelled Gillworth in horror before he fell backwards in a dead faint.

"What did you do to him?" accused Evelyn.

"Pretend you don't see the snakes," hissed Harry into Hermione's ear and she nodded. "Really, I don't know what you mean, our poor teacher fainted under the pressure of his own bad teaching abilities."

"We better get the Headmistress, he could have been hurt," said Hermione in a mock worried voice. "C'mon Harry."

"Brilliant idea Hermione," agreed Harry as he cancelled the illusion spell as the two walked out of the classroom.

"How did you do that, it didn't seem like no one else saw the snakes?" questioned Hermione.

"Because, I made the illusion to repel all Muggles, it's all about intent you see," lectured Harry.

"Advanced illusionary spells, wow, that's supposed to be like really hard magic," said Hermione in an awed voice as Harry raised his eyebrow. "I borrowed one of your books, I figure you wouldn't mind."

"No, it's good to get a head start," agreed Harry.

"What if there had been any other magical people in their besides us?" asked Hermione.

"They're not," said Harry in a certain voice. "Hermione, I've been planning this little farewell prank for weeks, but it's just much more than a mere prank, as I'm going to make sure that no one suffers from Gillworth's horrid teaching ever again."

"How?" prodded Hermione.

"Now, Hermione, I don't want to spoil the surprise but Gillworth will be taken care of," said Harry and they walked off to get the Headmistress.

At the end of the day, Harry and Hermione walked off from the school.

"Harry, an entire summer without school it's going to be..." replied Hermione.

“Excellent!” concluded Harry.

“I know, but what if we fall behind?” asked Hermione in a worried voice.

“Hermione, we’re the best two students in our year, we’ve studied our brains out for ten months in the year, so let’s go out and enjoy our time off from school,” answered Harry in an excited voice. “After all, we ended the year in a bang.”

Evelyn stomped around, flanked by her remaining few friends, who looked all smug and superior. In an interesting note, those friends also had to repeat the year again.

“You two, it’s all your fault that I have to take this year over again and those guys in those white jackets said they are going to take away Uncle Remy for a very long time!” cried Evelyn. “I don’t know where they’re taking him but they put a funny jacket on him!”

“Uncle Remy is going to be spending some quality time in a nice rubber room with no windows for seeing things that are not there,” said Harry.

“Evelyn, just leave, you’re not better than us, so stop being so smug,” added Hermione and Evelyn shoved Hermione lightly but since she was weak, Hermione didn’t move backwards. “Honestly, that’s pathetic.”

Evelyn stuck her nose up in the air snobbishly.

“Don’t see what Potter sees in you, I’d be a much better friend than you, at least I take my nose out of a book for some fresh air once and a while,” muttered Evelyn. “Nothing but a buck teeth nightmare with frizzy hair, not as smart and pretty like I am. Then again, I’m sure that scar might have affected Potter’s brain.”

Evelyn’s friends then screamed and leapt back from the girl.

“What now?” prompted Evelyn as she stuck her nose into the air.

“Evelyn, your hair’s gone!” shrieked one of the girls.

“Ew, ick!” added a second girl.

“We’re not your friends anymore, you’re bald,” said the third girl as they stormed off, noses stuck into the air.

Evelyn felt the top of her head and she shrieked when she felt her baldness. She burst into tears before she ran shrieking in horror. She had to repeat this year, her favorite uncle was taken away, she lost all of her friends, and now her hair. This was the worst day in Evelyn’s short life.

“What I didn’t do anything,” responded Harry in an innocent voice as Hermione looked curiously at him and then she realized what she might have done.

“Accidental magic again,” suggested Hermione weakly.

“I guess, once we get your Occlumency down, we need to get that under control,” responded Harry. “I’m sure her hair will grow back, eventually, maybe.”

In the cavernous headquarters of the Board of Governors, the nameless, faceless council of twelve board members were submerged in the shadows behind a long table, where only their right hands were visible to anyone else in the room.

On the other end of the table, Nicholas Flamel sat behind the table, dressed in a pinstriped three piece suit and a derby hat with pink feather sticking out of the top of it, while wearing spectacles straight out of the eighteenth century.

“Congratulations, Nicholas Flamel, you have been accepted as the brand new Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry!” chorused the twelve board members in a creepy, unified tone.

“Much obliged,” replied Flamel in a jovial voice. “The wife’s been needling me about getting a job, we’re at each other’s throats half the time, but when you’ve been married for nearly seven hundred years, you’ll have an occasional martial spat or two.”

“Not so fast, Nicholas Flamel, you must recite the oath of the Headmaster,” added the Board of Governors in unison. “Now repeat after us, I, Nicholas Flamel, do solemnly swear...”

“I, Nicholas Flamel, do solemnly vow,” said Flamel before adding. “Sorry, the wife wants me to cut down on the swearing, believe me, I’ve learned some rather interesting one’s over the last seven hundred or so years.”

“To uphold the honor of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry,” continued the Board of Governors.

“To uphold the honor of Hogwarts School of the Witchcraft and Wizardry,” repeated Flamel.

“Along with all the decrees passed by the Board of Governors,” continued the Board of Governors.

“Along with any decrees that are fair and have not been influenced by blackmail,” said Flamel.

“And protect the school from any external security threats,” concluded the board.

“If anyone messes with Hogwarts on my watch, they’ll be hexed into oblivion,” concluded Flamel.

“Congratulations Professor Flamel, you’re now officially the headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry,” declared the board of governors in their creepy, unified manner as one of them handed Flamel a stack of folders, while still mysteriously submerged in the shadows “Now there is the matter of filling the vacant position of Potions Professor at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. We have several candidates that you should interview awaiting outside the chambers.”

“Send them in one by one,” requested Flamel.

The doors swung open as a middle aged man with brown hair walked into the office, before he stood in front of Flamel.

“Good morning, I’m the Headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Nicholas Flamel,” answered Flamel as he shook the applicant’s hand.

“Richard R. Richards,” answered the applicant, careful to maintain eye contact as Flamel flipped through the folder.

“Ah, Mr. Richards, it says here that you were the Potions Professor of the Liberty School of Magic for fifteen years,” replied Flamel. “Plus, you have a second level mastery degree in potions, very good then but the United States teaching system is a bit different then the British teaching system, from what I’ve seen it’s a bit more sporadic. I feel that you may have to be acquainted with our style so the transition is smooth and easy. Still, take the time to readjust your methods and if we need another replacement, I’ll be more than happy to take another look at you.”

“Ah yes, thank you Professor Flamel for your time,” answered Richards as the two shook hands again and Richards walked off, a little bit put out that he didn’t get the job.

“Next!” called Flamel and the door swung open to revealed Gilderoy Lockhart walking inside wearing violet robes with his hair perfectly conditioned. Before Lockhart could open his mouth, Flamel cut him off. “Next!”

“Nicholas my old chap, surely you recognize that I would be a suitable candidate to fill the role of Potions Professor,” replied Lockhart. “Perhaps you may have read my books, detailing my many travels which I had to use potions among the rare and exotic.”

“Believe me, Gilderoy I have read all of your books when I felt like I needed help to properly vomit,” answered Flamel calmly. “And for the record, I’ve found two thousand, seven hundred, and nineteen factual inaccuracies in your complete collection and I daresay I may have found more if I would have read your books more than once. I will be sending you that list in due time to the Daily Prophet, I trust Mr. Barone would have fun with it.”

Lockhart sat there, mouth wide open, unable to formulate two words.

"I do apologize Gilderoy of depriving you of the opportunity to fill the minds of young children with rubbish," replied Flamel. "Dumbledore might have hired you but that's Dumbledore for you, that manipulative young coot. Now, next!"

Lockhart was blasted out of the Board of Governors chambers

"My hair!" shrieked Lockhart from outside as a small figure walked into the chambers. The figure of Killer Schwartz, dressed in his military fatigues, with his porn star mustache and prominent mullet sticking out.

The black midget looked at Flamel who looked around.

"I said next," replied Flamel.

"Down here mate," declared Killer Schwartz.

"Ah forgive me Mr..." prompted Flamel.

"The name's Schwartz, Killer Schwartz," responded Killer Schwartz. "My friends call me Killer Schwartz but my enemies call me...Killer Schwartz."

"Killer Schwartz, what makes you think you're qualified to teaches Potion at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry?" prompted Flamel.

"Potions, I thought this was the Bounty Collection office," replied Schwartz.

"Oh, you want the chamber three hallways down to your right," said Flamel.

"Thanks for the information, if you need any dangerously stupid magical creatures to be captured, call for Killer Schwartz," said Killer Schwartz as he made his way to the Bounty Collection office.

"Next!" remarked Flamel and the large figure of Crabbe walked into the chambers next, with a blank look on his face.

“Ah, Vincent Crabbe Senior, come in,” encouraged Flamel and Crabbe stupidly walked into the room. “So tell me, what are your qualifications?”

Crabbe looked blankly at Flamel.

“Fascinating, quite fascinating, truthfully fascinating but sadly a mute would not be able to be able to properly teach a class at Hogwarts,” explained Flamel. “While you’re a step up from Snape, you still aren’t quite what we’re looking for. Still, your qualifications are quite excellent but your inability to talk prevents you from getting the job”

Crabbe just walked away without the slightest bit of emotions. Flamel leaned back slightly, coming to the unfortunate realization that the standards for people who applied for the position of Potions Professor for Hogwarts had dropped since the period in the sixteen seventies, eighties, and nineties that he had taught the subject under an assumed name at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

“Next,” said Flamel and Narcissa Black walked into the chambers, her blond hair flipping from side to side. “Ah, Narcissa Black, good day to you.”

“Good morning, Headmaster Flamel,” said Narcissa respectively. “As you know, I’m here to apply for the position of Potions Professor at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. You have my school records, along with Minerva McGonagall’s letter of recommendation that I’d receive the position”

“Yes I did Miss Black and looking through your qualifications, you look more than qualified,” answered Flamel. “I’m at a loss to understand why you weren’t hired in the first place...”

“Professor Flamel with all due respect, this woman’s husband bullied us into submission with black mail to push our agenda, we cannot forgive this,” interjected the twelve board members in sequence.

“Former husband,” corrected Narcissa.

“Now, I’m sure if we put her on a period of probation to prove herself to us, she can safely be given a job,” said Flamel in a firm voice.

“After all her qualifications are the best I can see, so it would be foolish not to allow her to share her knowledge with the young minds at Hogwarts.”

“Very well Flamel but be warned, we’ll be keeping an eye on Narcissa Black and should she attempt anything that threatens Hogwarts or the students within at any time, the Board of Governors will be forced to take swift and decisive action,” chorused the Board of Governors simultaneously.

“Good then, Professor Black, you’re now the new Potions Mistress for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, I suspect I’ll be seeing you all too soon,” said Flamel kindly. “Good day to you.”

“The same to you, Professor Flamel,” replied Narcissa with a respectful bow of her head and Flamel responded in kind as Narcissa walked off.

On July Thirty First, Harry and Sirius were in Diagon Alley, Harry under the guise of Boss Barone. Sirius insisted today would be a good day to take a couple of hours to check up at Harry’s finances at Gringotts. On the other hand, Harry suspected that Sirius just wanted to get him out of the house so the others could arrange a surprise party for his birthday, but that was just his paranoid self speaking.

As they walked out of Gringotts, a rather interesting sign in front of a store called Wacky Wizard Things. It was a small store, buried between Flourish and Blotts and Quality Quidditch Supplies. Moving closer, the sign read: *Harry Potter Birthday Sale: All Harry Potter related merchandise Thirty Percent Off.*

“Sirius, look at that,” remarked Harry. “I’ve got to take a closer look at this.”

Sirius followed his godson into the store and it only took Harry thirty seconds to find something to get righteously indignant about.

“Oh for Merlin’s sake, look at this, Harry Potter toilet paper,” muttered Harry in an agitated voice.

“Wait, that’s just regular toilet paper with a picture of a lightning bolt plastered on the package, at three times the cost,” said Sirius frowning. “And three times the cost, even with the sale price.”

“And it’s almost sold out too, only one package left, people buy this crap, this is absolutely disgusting how people are taken advantage of with tacky merchandise such as this, look Harry Potter dinner ware, the official Harry Potter board game, cheap Harry Potter dolls, those don’t even look like me at all, and the official Harry Potter pop-up book, among other things,” lectured Harry. “The question I’m asking is why haven’t I ever seen a knut of this. If people are going to prostitute my name to sell tacky merchandise, shouldn’t I at least get some money out of it?”

“Come to think of it, yeah Harry,” replied Sirius as he pulled an action figure on the shelf. “Look the official Sirius Black action figure, with Killing Curse action.”

“Merlin you’ve been innocent for three months and they still have that on the shelf,” said Harry rolling his eyes as Sirius pushed the “try me” button on the chest of the action figure, which caused the plastic wand in his hand to light up green.

“Plus it doesn’t even look like me,” added Sirius. “What kind of idiots would buy this stuff?”

At then the door opened and nine Weasleys walked inside.

“Mum look, they’ve got the new Harry Potter doll, dressed in Gryffindor robes,” squealed Ginny. “Can I please have it, please?”

Vinny slightly poked his head out from underneath Harry’s shirt.

“Is it just me, or did it get redder in here?” commented Vinny but Harry shushed him before he motioned Sirius to step back to watch the Weasleys.

“I don’t know Ginny, it’s a bit expensive,” said Molly Weasley.

“Yes and your other doll might get jealous,” said Fred.

“Yeah, thinking that you’ve replaced him,” added George.

“Please Mum,” begged Ginny.

“Maybe for your birthday, dear,” answered Molly Weasley as she looked at the price apprehensively, thinking that it would be a long time before they could even hope to afford this item for their daughter.

“Look at all these dolls in Gryffindor robes,” said Barone as he walked out the shadows with Sirius. “Not one Harry Potter doll in any other house robe.”

“Well of course, we all know that Harry Potter will have to get sorted into Gryffindor,” replied Ron Weasley proudly.

“Ron, don’t talk to...” started Molly but her eyes narrowed when she recognized who she was talking to. “Well, Allan Michael Barone?”

“Ah, you must be the...Weasleys,” replied Barone calmly as he looked them over, his eyes resting on both Ron and Ginny for the briefest of seconds in a cold stare before he took the other family members into account, nodding approvingly when he reached the twins.

“Yes, we are and I just have something to tell you,” said Molly.

“Molly not in public, please,” muttered Arthur in a pleading voice.

“Barone, you take a child that Albus Dumbledore had ensured that was safe and took him from his appointed home, kidnapping him!” shouted Molly in an angry voice. “Furthermore, you fabricated lies to get destroy Dumbledore’s reputation and you somehow controlled the Ministry of Magic with obvious dark magic! You’re not a fit guardian for a child in the first place and if I had anything to say about it, you would have been thrown into Azkaban. All your crimes will catch up to you in the end, I just hope that poor Harry Potter isn’t victimized too badly by your petty games!”

Barone stood there, not backing down at all, and stood there calmly.

"Are you done yet?" asked Barone casually. "I'd watch all the yelling if I was you, it could raise your blood pressure to dangerous levels and I would hate to see so many children be without a mother because of a rage induced heart attack."

"HOW DARE YOU DISRESPECT ME?" shouted Molly and Barone just nodded, before motioning for Sirius to follow him. "HEY, GET BACK HERE, YOU CAN'T JUST WALK AWAY FROM ME WHEN I'M TALKING TO YOU!"

However, Barone and Sirius kept walking.

"Mum, I think they did walk away from you," said George.

"That man's a hero among men," added Fred.

"Quiet you two, it's obvious that mother is just concerned for the fact that a ruffian like that is running unchecked and corrupting the Boy-Who-Lived," ordered Percy pompously.

"Yes, that Barone bloke actually thought that Harry Potter would get sorted into any house but Gryffindor, I mean he has to be in Gryffindor so we can be best friends forever," remarked Ron happily.

As Harry had suspected, Sirius's attempts to divert him to Diagon Alley had been for an attempt to stall him so a birthday party could be prepared. It was a small gathering, with Hermione and her parents, Antonio, and Remus coming for Harry's seventh birthday party. After opening a few presents, it was time for cake.

The cake looked good enough, but it tasted a bit off, which could have been accounted for the fact that Hermione's parents were dentists and thus her mother didn't put any sugar in the cake.

"I suspected this would happen when you told me Hermione's parents were dentists, but I've eaten better shoe leather when I was in my Animagus form," muttered Sirius when Marie was out of an earshot.

"Sirius, don't know what you're talking about, the cake tastes wonderful," answered Jonathan Granger.

“Plus think of all the cavities you’ll avoid,” added Hermione.

“Bah, I’m a wizard, I can just charm those away,” said Sirius as he reached into the pocket of his robe before he pulled out a flask of sugar. “Luckily I came prepared.”

“Hey, Sirius, could you spare some of that?” asked Harry hopefully as he watched Sirius siphon the sugar onto his cake, before he took a bite.

“No can do, Harry, you should have came prepared,” said Sirius as he took another bite as Harry just realized something.

“Well, I’m an idiot, I can just conjure some sugar, I’m a wizard after all,” said Harry.

“No, Harry, you can’t, the magical creation of sugar is impossible under Gamp’s Five Laws of Elemental Transfiguration,” informed Remus. “Sugar can’t be just magically created, modified, or mixed in, it’s the fifth, final, and perhaps most frustrating law.”

“Curse you Gamp,” said Harry as he hung his head. “Well I guess I’m going to have to give myself that birthday present to myself to lift my spirits.”

Harry pulled a small wrapped box from inside his robe and unwrapped it in a few seconds, before he opened the box.

“It’s a wand,” said Sirius.

“Not just any wand, Sirius, its Albus Dumbledore’s wand,” explained Harry. “You see, I bought it when all of his possessions were auctioned off, I just never had reason to mention it until now. I also got my Invisibility Cloak back, but it seems like I might be missing something, almost like there should be a third thing along with those two items.”

Harry just shrugged as Hermione’s mother had rejoined the table.

“Probably nothing important, but I sure wish this cake I’m eating had some sugar in it,” said Harry and the wand lit enough, before it

engulfed the piece of cake with yellow light. Harry picked up the cake and took a tentative bite out of it. "Now that's more like it. Dig the sugary taste."

Remus and Sirius looked at each other. Harry had broken the very laws of magic with Dumbledore's old wand.

"That's no mere wand," whispered Sirius in a cryptic voice as Harry leaned backwards as the others looked at him concerned.

"Okay, this wand may be good, but it requires me to channel too much power to use it, so it does me no good, at least until I'm powerful enough to control it without getting fatigued," concluded Harry as he pocketed Dumbledore's former wand.

As the months went by, thanks to some creative maneuvering by the law office of Schyster and Boldface, Harry received royalties from all Harry Potter related merchandise. The companies offered sixty five percent, when one Boss Barone along with some mobster bodyguards came to visit their company headquarters.

Another school year happened and Hermione actually seemed to be a bit disappointed that the holiday went by so fast, but she resolved to be ready to return to learn. At this point, it was the first week of October, with Harry and Hermione, seven and eight years old respectively. It was a rather peaceful year with a teacher that actually taught the subject material. The Daily Prophet also was doing well, with several new subscribers and Harry achieved a great deal of profit all across the board in all of his business ventures.

It was a Wednesday afternoon and Harry had passed the time by going over his memories using the pensieve that Remus and Sirius had bought him for his birthday to help him remember memories that were currently blocked in parts of his brain that had been partially damaged by the Cruciatus Curse.

Harry had just pulled himself from the pensieve, a rather disturbed look etched in his eyes as Sirius opened the door.

"Hey Harry how are..." started Sirius and Harry looked absolutely mortified as he stared into the Pensieve. "What's wrong?"

“As I was going through my memories, I came to a really disturbing realization,” explained Harry. “It was a day that I got into an altercation with a group of Slytherin boys in my year.”

“Harry, I got into an altercation with Slytherins every day for seven years,” said Sirius. “Surely it can’t be that disturbing.”

“Well you want to know who one of the boys in that group was?” asked Harry and Sirius nodded. “Blaise Zabini.”

Sirius did a double take and seemed to lose the ability to speak.

“I know, the name Zabini did sound familiar to me and now I know, Blaise Zabini’s mother is Adrianna Zabini, who had married seven husbands in my timeline, before they died under mysterious circumstances,” continued Harry. “Call me insane, but I have a hunch about why Blaise was a boy in the other timeline.”

“Yes, because I’m baffled,” said Sirius.

“Her mother, paranoid that she would be usurped by someone younger than her, used a gender change ritual to turn her daughter into her son,” suggested Harry. “A book she stole from the library of Nicholas Flamel.”

Sirius nodded, it made sense, albeit in a rather insane matter.

“Furthermore, Blaise wasn’t at school today, our teacher mentioned she switched schools,” added Harry. “She was there yesterday, so Adrianna must have felt she could have pulled off the gender change ritual today but something tells me that she hasn’t gotten around to doing so yet.”

“Which means Harry?” asked Sirius.

“I’m going to do what I do best, alter the timeline even more. The fact remains, I’m not going to let someone who is kind of, sort of, my friend have their gender switched,” answered Harry as he rose up to his feet to collect as much backup as possible, before leaving. Sirius followed close behind him.

Blaise found herself chained against the wall of the basement of her house as her mother stood over her with a smirk on her face.

“Mother, why are you doing this?” cried Blaise. “You tried to attack me in my bed today and...”

“Shut up, Blaise,” ordered Adrianna. “I wished to have put you under when you were asleep but you just had to be awake when I had entered your room. That little fight you tried to put up was inspired, holding me off for half of the day and calling your father, well it’s not like he can stop me.”

Adrianna paced back and forth, before she checked the potion that was brewing.

“Another few minutes and it will be ready,” muttered Adrianna to herself. “Blaise, your father managed to muck up everything when you were born a girl but now I’ll make everything right.”

“What are you going to do to me?” asked Blaise. “Let me go, please, don’t hurt me?”

“The innocent little girl act may work on your father, but it won’t work on me,” answered Adrianna coldly. “It’s quite sickening too, but you won’t be a threat to my plans anymore. I know for a fact you’re grow up to be quite beautiful, but I obviously can’t have that as there are many other fortunes that I must get my hands on. STUPEFY!”

Blaise was struck, unable to move and knocked unconscious as Adrianna heard an attempt for her husband and his mobster friends to get in.

“Edward, it’s useless!” called Adrianna. “Soon you’ll have a brand new son!”

Outside, Boss Zabini and the mobsters couldn’t even manage to scratch the front door with their best efforts.

“Its official, my wife’s gone bat shit insane,” said Boss Zabini “See if you can find another way in.”

“Boss, maybe you should call the police,” suggested one of the mobsters.

“With all the illegal contraband in that house!” snapped Zabini. “Now go around.”

A limo sped up the street at the speed of light and Zabini stopped, as the limo doors burst open, to reveal at least a dozen machine gun toting mobsters dressed in brand new suits.

“Barone!” growled Zabini as he waved his mobsters over. “Aim to kill them, we need to get my daughter out of the basement.

“Protect them with shield charms, I’m going to go in through the window, that looks like the only way inside that hasn’t been blocked,” ordered Harry from underneath the Invisibility Cloak to Remus and Sirius.

Sure enough, the shield charms went up, to block the bullets as Harry slipped through the window, underneath his Invisibility Cloak, his seven year form just managing to get through the tiny space.

Adrianna Zabini reached over to scoop some of the gender changing potion out of the cauldron to physically change Blaise into a boy, before she used the complex rituals to transform her mind and soul as well. She nearly pulled Blaise’s mouth open when a loud bang echoed through the basement that caused her to spin around and she backtracked, Barone stood there, coolly staring her down.

“Ah, my husband’s business rival, the infamous Boss Barone,” said Adrianna as she aimed her wand at Barone. “AVADA KEDAVRA!”

A jet of green light flew towards Harry who did the only sensible thing he could think of. Namely he flopped face first onto the ground and the curse sailed over him, harmlessly connecting with the wall.

“A Killing Curse, distinct lack of form, now I believe there will be no gender switching today,” said Barone calmly as he pointed his wand at Adrianna.

“There will be, both my daughter and you, because I’m going to slice your balls off for interfering, Barone!” cried Adrianna in a manic voice. “Nullus Testis!”

“Protego!” countered Barone, as the black light sliced through the air but it was absorbed in the shield.

The shield faded and Harry felt a bit from blocking a powerful curse, becoming light headed and a second later, a very sharp arrow pierced his right arm.

“The infamous Barone, without your little parlor tricks your nothing!” replied Adrianna with disdain as she watched Barone fall to the ground, blood dripping from his right arm as he pulled the arrow. She used her wand to fling him across the room, right towards the stone walls at a high velocity. “Now, back to making creating my new son.”

Harry pulled himself up; he saw his hair turning black and one of his haunting blue eyes turning green in a mirror off to the side. He had to end this as he had already burned out a lot of power blocking his opponent’s curse and cushioning the wall to avoid having his skull cracked open like an eggshell.

Gingerly, Harry pulled himself up and stepped in between mother and daughter just as she prepared to administer the gender switching potion, dropping his handgun to the ground in the process.

“EVANESO!” shouted Harry and the potion inside the vial vanished.

“Fool, I’ve made enough for several doses just in case the unforeseen happens,” said Adrianna with a smug look.

“Yes, I know,” replied Harry as he pointed a handgun at the cauldron behind Adrianna and pulled the trigger.

In an instant, a bullet pierced the cauldron and Adrianna watched as the potion drained from the cauldron.

“NO!” yelled Adrianna as she turned around and attempted to salvage enough of the potion to use on Blaise but to her absolute horror, there wasn’t enough left to make a full switch and thus three months of

careful brewing was down the drain. She turned to Barone, fully prepared to butcher him alive and in an instant, she was lifted into the air and propelled across the room.

Harry looked at Blaise's restraints and attempted to use any spell to cut her free, but much to his frustration, nothing worked.

In an instant, Harry recoiled in pain and dropped to the ground, his left foot causing an great deal of pain. He turned around as Adrianna Zabini stood in front of him, seething in absolute anger. Harry attempted to pull himself up but he came to the unfortunate realization Adrianna Zabini had shot him in the foot with the handgun he had dropped earlier.

"Barone, you ruined everything, so I'm going to kill you!" yelled Adrianna as she pointed the handgun right at Barone's chest. "Any last words before I finish you off."

"Just two," breathed Barone in a pained voice, as he managed to aim his wand. "Accio bookcase!"

The bookcase behind Adrianna zoomed right towards Harry at a high velocity and smacked into Adrianna. Harry jerked his wand forward as he rolled away and the book case fell on top of Adrianna, having trapped her underneath.

Harry pulled himself up, before using his wand to remove the bullet from his heel before he spent a couple of minutes healing himself of his wounds.

The door of the basement burst open and Edward Zabini moved downstairs. Harry quickly summoned every bit of strength to change into Barone.

"Is she dead?" asked Zabini, as he looked at Adrianna.

"No, just badly injured," remarked Harry as he shot a silvery object from his wand out the window before he caused a jet of blue light to engulf Adrianna. "I've told my people to summon the Ministry in a few minutes and this charm should give her a compulsion to tell the

absolute truth for the next day or so. There will be no way she can avoid a one way ticket to Azkaban.”

“I should have you fit for cement shoes, Barone, for what you did to me since you arrived on the scene,” responded Boss Zabini. “Still, you saved my daughter and knocked my wife out, so that put me in a good mood so I’ll let you live just for today.”

“A very temporary temporary cease fire, I see,” retorted Harry. “But remember, Zabini, tomorrow’s another business day.”

“Glad to see you speak my language Barone,” concluded Zabini as the two mob bosses stared each other down for a minute, before they parted ways, ready to resume business as usual the next day.

Chapter Sixteen: Flashbacks Ahoy

The Ministry of Magic personified an atmosphere of chaos for one simple reason. Just the previous day, the Minister of Magic, Millicent Bagnold resigned from her position when her failing health came to the point where she could no longer be out of bed. The truth was that she should have resigned years ago, especially when her health started to fail, as she wasn't as assertive as she needed to be as Minister and it lead many high ranking officials to take advantage of the situation. Be that as it may many within the Wizarding World suspected that the long running, but rather historically unimportant Minister, would be dead by the time a new Minister was chosen.

Cornelius Oswald Fudge walked down the Ministry corridors with a spring in his step. The voting process would happen shortly, just after noon in fact. Since Crouch was disgraced a few years ago, that left Fudge the odds on favorite to win. For a few anxious months, there was talk of Amelia Bones running for Minister, but she announced that she much preferred her position on the Wizengamot for the time being.

As Fudge moved to his office, assured in the fact that he would soon be moving to a much larger and more spacious office, the door was opened a crack, signaling that someone was inside. Common sense would dictate that Fudge would quietly walk away and contact some Aurors to investigate the intrusion.

However, common sense and Cornelius Fudge were two things that didn't go hand in hand.

Fudge opened his office door, wand raised high into the air and stepped inside.

There he was, Barone, sitting at his desk, drinking his tea, and eating his crumpets.

"Barone, how did you get in here?" demanded Fudge.

"Front entrance," remarked Barone calmly. "Other than that, I can't tell you."

Fudge turned around and was realized the door was shut, locked tight.

“Alohomora!” cried Fudge but the door remained immobile.

“My schedule has been a bit tight lately, running a vast mafia empire and personally educating the Boy-Who-Lived on who he should trust to avoid being used as a Ministry pawn does take up a substantial amount of time,” continued Barone. “So, I have not been able to have a meeting with you. I do apologize for the short notice, but not much can be helped about that.”

“You’re trespassing on Ministry of Magic property, I could have you arrested Barone!” yelled Fudge but Barone responded by casually yawning.

“Cornelius, is that really anyway to talk to someone who could ruin your life with just a simple wave of his wand?” asked Barone and Fudge looked absolutely flustered, but before he could speak, Barone continued. “Dumbledore was a lot more important and had a better reputation than you, yet I cut him down to earth. Crouch, same thing, what makes you think I can’t sink you.”

“You had incriminating information on them Barone, you don’t have anything on me,” replied Fudge pompously which caused Barone to raise his eyebrow and adopt an amused smirk.

“I do,” said Barone calmly. “I heard things but it took me a couple of years of work to gather proof of your misdeeds Fudge. From cover ups of the harassment of Ministry officials who hold a different view from you and your pureblood chums, to your deplorable conduct towards some of the lower level female Ministry workers that have been covered up, to taking bribes to help suspected Death Eaters to cover their tracks, the most glaring example would be Lucius Malfoy!”

“There is no way to prove that, all the document copies were destroyed!” screamed Fudge.

“Not all of them, the Department of Records at Gringotts keeps records of everything from the Ministry, no matter how many

documents they shred,” said Barone. “When I mentioned your name, Cornelius, the goblins suddenly became unusually cooperative.”

“Bloody goblins,” muttered Fudge in a disgusted voice. “So, what will it cost, Barone?”

Barone looked at Fudge before he broke out into laughter, amused that Fudge would try to buy him off. While Fudge family fortune was above average, it still didn’t compare to the last year’s profit.

“Fudge, try to at least maintain the illusion that you’re not a blithering idiot,” said Barone. “I’m willing to withhold certain information from the masses, if you can swear on your magic that you will do nothing to double cross me or young Harry Potter.”

Fudge opened his mouth but Barone wasn’t finished.

“Oh, and I want your word that Dolores Umbridge will never be allowed in a high ranking position should you be elected Minister,” added Barone.

“Now, listen here Barone, you can’t just come in here and make demands,” said Fudge.

“I just did,” answered Barone. “Now either swear on your magic or else.”

“No,” said Fudge stubbornly. “You’re bluffing Barone and besides, by the time you print up that information in the Prophet, I’ll be the Minister and able to stop it.”

“What makes you think I haven’t printed it up already?” suggested Barone calmly as he waved his wand and a silvery streak shot underneath the door. “And now it’s sent out and in less than five minutes, it will be in the hands of nearly every witch and wizard in Britain. I can’t say it’s been a pleasure talking to you, Fudge.”

Fudge raised his wand to stun Barone but he blinked in surprise, Barone was gone and now as he thought about it, he wasn’t so sure Barone was in his office in the first place.

“An illusion,” muttered Fudge darkly as his office door swung open and Fudge bolted from it to work damage control. There would be no way that he would be denied becoming Minister of Magic.

Many miles away, hours later, Harry Potter sat in an office of one of his many bases of operation, the ten year old wizard sitting attentively right by the Wizarding wireless, waiting for the announcement of the new Minister of Magic. As he sat, Harry reflected on the last couple of years, ever since that faithful day that he saved Blaise from her mother’s insane plot to change her gender. Adrianna Zabini was currently locked inside Azkaban and the gender changing book was safely back in the possession of Flamel, who by all indications was doing an excellent job as Headmaster of Hogwarts, but Harry would see for himself when he attended school in the next year.

The friendship between himself, Blaise, and Hermione seemed to be a bit odd to say the least. There was a nagging little voice in the back of Harry’s head that said that Hermione only just barely tolerated Blaise for Harry’s sake and still distrusted the girl because of who her father was. There could be no other explanation for how cool Hermione was towards Blaise.

If Blaise noticed Hermione’s attitude to her, the girl didn’t show it one bit. While they only interacted at school, because Harry got the impression reading between the lines from Blaise’s attitude and demeanor when she mentioned her father that he really didn’t trust Harry due to his guardian being Boss Zabini’s most hated business rival. Despite the fact the fact that Zabini knew Barone saved his daughter, the mob rivalry between the two organizations was still extremely heated and there was a lot of unresolved bad blood. So outside of school they could not meet, as Boss Zabini would not trust Blaise to go to Harry’s house or would trust Harry in his home at all.

Harry could only imagine what Boss Zabini would think if he found out that Harry and Barone were one in the same. Harry resolved not to let that little secret out, only the highest ranking members of his organization knew of his dual identity.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, the final count of the voting for Minister of Magic has come in,” announced the voice over the wireless.

“Cornelius Oswald Fudge, despite recent allegations printed in the Daily Prophet, managed to finish second in the race to become Minister of Magic. The brand new Minister of Magic, beating Fudge by a margin of twelve percent, is a man who is a veteran of the Auror department and has vowed to take any steps to protect the magical community, Reginald Weaver.”

Harry sat by the radio, secure in the knowledge that his little leak of Ministry information had torpedoed Fudge’s chances of becoming Ministry. Once the scathing letters and howlers rolled into the Ministry, Fudge would have to find answers quick to get himself out of this mess. Granted, it wasn’t as spectacular as Crouch’s destruction but it served its intended purpose in keeping Fudge as far away from the Minister of Magic position as possible.

With Fudge out of the picture, Umbridge wouldn’t have risen up into the Ministry as quickly as she done but Harry wasn’t going to leave anything to chance. The second it looked like Umbridge might attempt to make a pull for more power, she would be the next victim of Harry’s waste management project.

As for the new Minister, Harry really didn’t know all that much about him which was a good thing as if he had been someone who crossed Harry in the past, the Boy-Who-Lived-Twice would have had remembered him vividly. The one bit of information that Harry remember is that Reginald Weaver had finished Auror training the same year as Mad-Eye Moody and was second in his class just underneath Moody.

Someone knocking on his door brought Harry out of his thoughts.

“Come in,” prompted Harry and the door opened, allowing Hermione to enter Harry’s office. “Oh, hello Hermione.”

“Good evening, Harry,” replied Hermione with an eager smile. “Now, last night after your birthday party, you checked my Occlumency and found that I had mastered pretty well.”

“Yes, I remember that, Hermione,” said Harry slowly. “I also told you that I would tell you everything when there was enough time.”

"I remember, but I asked Mum if I could stay over here tonight, and she said yes, so if you would like to, you can tell me what the big secret that you've been keeping from me from four years is," answered Hermione.

"Your mother let you stay over here tonight, at headquarters from my organization," said Harry slowly.

"Harry, this is the safest building out of the three, but she was a little apprehensive until Uncle Antonio told her that there is no one here but you, Sirius, Remus, and a few security guards," replied Hermione.

"Yes, true, most of the questionable activity does come out of the other two bases of operation," admitted Harry calmly. "Still, Hermione, even though your Occlumency holds up fine, I still don't know if it's a good idea..."

"Why, don't you trust me?" questioned Hermione in a slightly hurt voice.

"I trust you Hermione, more than most, but this is a big thing you want me to tell you," answered Harry.

"I understand Harry and I won't force you to tell me," said Hermione in a deflated voice and Harry sighed, he hated when Hermione gave him that look in the old timeline. It made him feel that he was in the wrong, even when he wasn't.

"Yes, I don't have to tell you Hermione," replied Harry before adding in a resigned voice. "But it would be best for you to know, I suppose. Still, Hermione, the information I'm going to give you is rather a lot to take in. If you're sure, I'm going to tell you everything and I mean everything."

"There's nothing you can tell me that would stop me from being your friend Harry," said Hermione firmly, the ten, nearly eleven, year old girl looking at Harry calmly. "I won't tell anyone anything, no matter how shocking it is."

Harry put a silencing charm on the doorway not for anyone to overhear. He took several deep breaths, Hermione had been ready

for a few months, but Harry had managed to find little things wrong with her Occlumency to forestall the process. He couldn't quite predict how this Hermione was react, as she was a bit different in personality, although just as smart.

"Hermione, when I was six years old, an accident from twenty years into the future transported my future self's memories into my younger body," said Harry quickly and Hermione's eyes widened in comprehension. "It was just a couple weeks before I met you for the first time in this reality."

Hermione just stared at Harry with an unreadable expression on her face and Harry decided it would be best to continue.

"Now, before I tell you what caused the accident, I need to tell you that this all starts with a man named Tom Marvolo Riddle," continued Harry. "He was born over sixty years ago. His mother, Merope, a witch, had fallen in love with a Muggle named Tom Riddle. This was forbidden love, as Merope's family, her father and her brother, were notorious Muggle haters and terrorized the Muggles of the village several times, landing them into trouble with the Ministry of Magic. Riddle was a high ranking aristocrat and would not even look twice at a commoner like Merope."

Hermione sat in front of Harry, listening attentively, but didn't say a word.

"Once the remaining members of her family were sent to Azkaban for assaulting the same Muggle that she had fell in love with, Merope made her move, tricking Riddle into drinking an extremely powerful love potion and they were married some time later, quite the scandal in the village too," said Harry. "Merope got cold feet and stopped giving Riddle the love potion, he left her, when she was pregnant with his son."

"You mean he didn't stay around for his son!" exclaimed Hermione in an absolutely disgusted tone, breaking her silence.

"I don't even know if Riddle knew that Merope was pregnant but she stayed alive only long enough for the birth and then she died, leaving her son, Tom Marvolo Riddle, named after both his Muggle father and

wizard grandfather at an orphanage,” said Harry. “To make a long story that little orphan boy grew up into one of the most feared, the most dangerous wizards of all time, Lord Voldemort. Most people fear to speak his name, referring to him as only You-Know-Who or He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named but I hold no fear for a name. The wizard behind the name is an entire different matter entirely, he’s both an extremely gifted, powerful, intelligent wizard and certifiable nutcase at the same time. A dangerous combination and he’s ruined my life. For if Lord Voldemort never existed, my parents would still be alive.”

Hermione looked absolutely horrified, Harry had told her that his parents had died when he was really young but he never did tell the circumstances. Murder had never really entered into Hermione’s mind, but then again horrifying concepts like that had only been a recent addition to Hermione’s vocabulary.

“He also tried to kill me,” continued Harry and Hermione gasped in horror. “The scar on my forehead is the proof of that, it creates a connection between myself and Voldemort that won’t be gone until I kill Voldemort or he kills me.”

“Harry, you said he tried to kill you,” said Hermione slowly.

“Yes, I know, and I don’t know, I really don’t,” answered Harry dryly. “He was blasted out of his body when he used the unblockable Killing Curse. Dumbledore seems to think it has something to do with my mother sacrificing herself, some contrived thing involving love, but it just doesn’t make sense. I bet you all the money in the world that throughout history other mothers and their children were in the same situation, but the children were killed as well. So, I’m guessing that Dumbledore was wrong.”

“It wouldn’t be the first time he would have been wrong, he did put you with those horrid people,” remarked Hermione. “Still, Harry, back to the time travel thing, I believe you because honestly, it makes perfect sense but how did you even travel back that far? I’ve read a little bit about time travel and it’s always been detailed as being dangerous to travel back even a few minutes.”

“I didn’t time travel in a conventional manner, my physical body wasn’t sent back, just my older mind and it was never meant to

happen,” explained Harry. “I erased everything from the point I was accidentally sent back and started over with a clean slate. To be honest with you, the ending wasn’t exactly that pleasant. Voldemort and his followers, Death Eaters, as they were called, took over everything in Wizarding World. There were a few scattered attempts at resistance, but nearly everyone who opposed him were harshly destroyed or used as slave labor. Eventually the world gave up hope and even I felt it was hopeless a few occasions, but you never let me give up Hermione.”

Hermione looked up; her future self appeared to have been friends with the old Harry.

“You were one of the only people that I trusted with my life, Hermione,” continued Harry. “You stood by me through the best of times and the very worst of times. I know it sounds sappy but even if it was technically your future self, I still want to thank you.”

“I’ll do the best to live up to the standard my future self had,” said Hermione with a smile. “You are my first friend Harry, my only friend.”

“You were killed in the old timeline,” said Harry bluntly. “By one of Voldemort’s most dangerous followers, Bellatrix Lestrange but you didn’t go down without a fight. In retaliation, I slaughtered Bellatrix, and began to concoct a plan that would end Voldemort once and for all. I created a potion that would turn my magic into a high level explosive charge that would leave nothing standing. Unfortunately, the prophecy got in the way and all it managed to wipe out was twenty years of history, before I regained my senses in my six year old body. The realization that I had to live the entire life all over again coming to me but I wasn’t going to live a replay of my old life. I would create a new timeline that had a different ending that did not result in me having to create a desperate, suicidal, plan.”

Harry took a deep breath.

“I told you exactly how the original timeline began and ended, now everything in between,” continued Harry.

Without further ado, Harry told Hermione of his first five years of Hogwarts, the major highlights and the lowlights. Hermione listened it

all, making no sound other than the occasional gasp and Harry could tell that Hermione was absolutely horrified at some of the things that Harry had to encounter during the first five years, at such a young age. He had lived a full life in just five years, but the worst and strangest was yet to come.

“Sirius died on that day, and I was very nearly pushed towards the breaking point,” concluded Harry. “Of course, he just had to tell me the prophecy involving me and Voldemort.”

“That’s the reason why he attacked you, all over a prophecy,” said Hermione.

“Yes, I never held any belief in fortune telling, it sounded rather dodgy, but the fact that Voldemort believed it caused all this,” remarked Harry. “Voldemort may be one of the most feared wizards in the world, his skills and intelligence high above nearly all, but since Voldemort learned part of the prophecy, I also came to the conclusion that he was paranoid. There could be no other logical reason of why he attacked an infant.”

“Yes, but what is the prophecy?” asked Hermione, who had an idea based on context clues that Harry dropped when he had been telling her about the first five years at Hogwarts.

“Either Voldemort is killed by me, or the world is doomed,” replied Harry and Hermione gasped, her eyes widened in horror. “I’m the only one who can kill him.”

“But is he the only one who could kill you?” wondered Hermione and Harry stopped, before he nodded.

“Based on the accidental time travel, it seems to me that Voldemort can only kill me, I can’t even kill myself,” said Harry. “Not that I want to put that theory to the test anytime soon in case I’m wrong.”

“So, that’s your fifth year, which means about eleven years before you were sent back in time,” prompted Hermione.

“Give or take a few months, yeah, but the worst is yet to come,” said Harry. “Now the rest of what I need to tell you will be assorted

memories, visually accurate and extremely graphic, viewed through a magical device called a pensieve. A device that allows a person to relieve their own memories with pin point accuracy, sometimes they are a bit too vivid for my taste and my memories are not for the weak of heart. If you think you can handle that..."

"Harry, I told you I want to see anything," said Hermione in a firm voice, but there was a tiny bit of apprehension in her voice

"Are you sure, Hermione?" questioned Harry and Hermione nodded her head quickly, which allowed Harry to pull out the pensieve, before he pulled open the stone top. "Okay, Hermione, just lean forward when I do and it will submerge yourself in my memories."

Hermione and Harry both leaned forward, before the world swirled around them.

It was fifth year, just a little less than a week after Harry had found out the contents of the prophecy. He sat with his legs crossed, his eyes shut, deep in thought, reflecting on the past five years, what he should have done differently, wondering who he could really trust.

"Potter!" yelled a voice and Harry opened his eyes, before he rose to his feet, as he saw Draco Malfoy, along with Crabbe and Goyle, standing by Malfoy's side as usual.

"Yes, what do you want?" asked Harry in a forced calm voice, but his mind was elsewhere.

"I'm just wondering what's up with you lately Potter, you look like someone killed your dog," remarked Draco casually before his eyes snapped up. "Oh wait, Aunt Bellatrix did do that to your mangy mutt of a godfather. If you ask me, the blood traitor had it coming a long time ago but I wouldn't worry, you'll be joining him soon"

Harry's right eye twitched, but he stared Draco right in the eyes.

"Tell me Draco, how is your father lately?" asked Harry. "I hear Azkaban is lovely this time of the year."

"You have no right to talk about my father, Potter," said Malfoy as he raised his wand threateningly at Harry but Harry didn't step back, in fact he looked amused in a twisted manner.

"Do it, Malfoy," said Harry. "Curse me, but you better hope I won't get up."

Draco refused to take the bait but Harry blasted the Malfoy heir backwards with a banishing spell. Crabbe and Goyle looked at each other stupidly.

"STUPEFY, STUPEFY!" shouted Harry and they were struck down, before Harry was right over Malfoy with quick reflexes and wrapped held his hands over his throat, preparing to strangle him at a moment's notice. "Give me one good reason why I shouldn't remove your head from your shoulders."

"You don't have the guts to kill me Potter," hissed Malfoy but a deadly jet of light barely missed Draco's face, incinerating a patch of grass.

"Mr. Potter, what on earth are you doing?" demanded a cold voice and Harry turned around slightly to see Professor Snape.

"I'm going to do the Wizzarding World a favor and kill Malfoy," replied Harry in a calm voice.

"Away from him, Potter, now!" snapped Snape and Harry pushed Draco to the ground roughly.

"Snape won't be here to save you all the time, Malfoy," said Harry coldly and Draco backed off slightly, obviously not wanting to retort in the presence of a teacher, even if it was the biased head of the Slytherin house.

"Potter..." started Snape.

"Let me guess, Professor Snape," interrupted Harry before he launched into a completely accurate, if a bit whiny, impression of Snape. "Detention, Potter, or maybe fifty points from Gryffindor."

Harry looked at Snape as if daring him to do his worst and sure enough, Snape made a grab for Harry but instinctively, Harry blasted Snape backwards. He flew up into the air before he crashed down to the ground and looked up at Harry with disdain.

"I'll have you expelled for this, Potter," said Snape in his most dangerous voice, the one that caused many students over the years to wet themselves but Harry just responded with a look of amusement. "Might I ask what you find so amusing about the possibility of you being expelled?"

"Dumbledore wouldn't let me be expelled, he needs me a lot more than I need him," said Harry calmly and Snape's eyes narrowed, before he quickly turned away, not wanting to look at Harry.

"Fine Potter, I'll let you off with a warning, now get out of my sight before I change my mind," said Snape coolly and Harry gave him a mocking short bow, before he walked towards the school.

"Harry, there you are, I've been looking all over for you," said Hermione.

"Hello, Hermione, I'm glad to see you out of the Hospital Wing," replied Harry. "Are you feeling better?"

"Yes loads, only light scarring now from that dreadful curse Dolohov used on me," answered Hermione. "I was out for a couple of hours, but Ron and Ginny told me that you've been avoiding everyone over the last week and even they've barely seen you."

"Yes, I can't say I've been too talkative, the only person I've really talked to since I left Dumbledore's office was Luna," said Harry.

"Why her?" asked Hermione.

"Hermione, Luna lost her mother when she was nine due to an experimental spell gone wrong, she understands better than most what it's like to lose someone" explained Harry. "Luna saw her mother die right before her eyes, much like I did Sirius. Sirius represented my last chance to have a real family and now it's gone."

Harry's voice held an extremely bitter edge and Hermione looked as if she didn't want to press the issue.

"Luna does have a different approach to the way she looks at life than you do, Hermione, but she's still extremely smart and understanding, like you" continued Harry. "I don't know what it is, but she seems to understand me and I would prefer you don't make comments under your breath deriding her eccentric beliefs."

"I understand you Harry, especially more so of the past couple of years," said Hermione.

"Hermione, you don't have to explain yourself, I know, you've proven yourself to be a loyal friend, who has always looked out for me," replied Harry. "I trust you with my life but still, I need to know something."

"What do you want to know Harry?" asked Hermione.

"If you had to choose between standing by me or following Dumbledore's word, even if it meant abandoning me, what would you choose?" questioned Harry and Hermione was taken aback by that question, but she had no hesitation in her voice.

"I've been through a lot with you Harry," responded Hermione. "I'll stand by you, no matter what, I would rather die than betray you, even if Professor Dumbledore told me to."

"Then, follow me to the Room of Requirement, I need to tell you something important that I can't afford anyone else to overhear," muttered Harry and Hermione nodded.

Hermione and Harry viewed their older selves appearing in the Room of Requirement, both with serious looks on their faces.

"I can't believe Professor Dumbledore would keep that from you, if you would have known five years ago..." started Hermione.

"I know," said Harry. "I would have started preparing for Voldemort, learning every bit of magic I could but what I know now isn't going to defeat Voldemort. Stunners, full body binds, and other such curses

might help allow a quick getaway against your average Death Eaters, but against Voldemort, he would roll right over me."

"What can you do?" asked Hermione. "Why does it have to be this way, Harry, it doesn't look like you can defeat him unless..."

"Everyone will look at it the wrong way, Hermione, they think I'm turning evil if I'm even caught reading up on the dark arts," interjected Harry. "Yet, regular magic isn't going to defeat Voldemort, and if die, everyone's doomed."

"Harry, I can't believe I'm encouraging you to do this, if you asked me a year ago if you should begin studying darker magic, I would be absolutely horrified, but now..." stammered Hermione before she sighed. "You really have no other option but Harry, you realize that most people can't separate dark and evil in their mind."

"Is dark magic necessarily evil if I use it to defeat Voldemort?" wondered Harry out loud and Hermione shook her head definitely.

"I don't think it is, but than most others would," said Hermione. "Those who have the viewpoint that dark equals evil hammered into their heads at birth may have a problem with you doing what is necessary and let's not forget the Ministry of Magic would do anything to save face after you made a fool out of them regarding Voldemort. They'd use even the slightest hint that you're studying the dark arts, they would find a way to lock you inside Azkaban until you're worn down enough so they can remold you into a mindless weapon."

Harry sat there, his mouth opened in astonishment that Hermione would say something like that.

"Come on, Harry, after dealing with Umbridge for the past year, I wouldn't put anything like that past the Ministry," said Hermione and Harry nodded in agreement.

"Yes, considering that fact, it might be best to watch my step and not let anyone find out about this," replied Harry. "I know I can trust you, I'm pretty sure I can trust Luna with anything, and Neville looks to be that way to. Lupin, maybe, but he does have a bit of loyalty towards Dumbledore for giving him the Defense Against the Dark Arts job

when he had not been given a job and I don't want to leave anything to chance."

Harry remained silent.

"You don't trust Ron and Ginny?" prompted Hermione.

"I'd like to think I can trust them but I can't run the risk of Mrs. Weasley finding out from them and going right to Dumbledore, because she's concerned about my welfare," answered Harry. "Still, Hermione, we'll keep it between us for now, as I still need to work out a way to get my hands on more questionable texts."

"You have the entire summer to figure something out Harry," said Hermione. "I'll find a way to contact you if I think of something, in fact, I still have your phone number somewhere."

"I just hope Uncle Vernon doesn't answer the phone this time like he did with Ron," replied Harry.

"If I do, I'll call during the day when he's likely to have been at work," said Hermione.

That particular memory faded out and slowly faded out towards the driveway of Number Four Privet Drive, just after the Order of the Phoenix gave their warning to The Dursleys just after Harry left the train after his fifth year.

"How dare those freaks tell me how I deal with you, boy?" demanded Uncle Vernon but Harry held his hand up.

"Vernon, those freaks, as you so eloquently put it, are close by monitoring everything, so mind your tongue at least until we get inside," hissed Harry and Vernon seemed to be holding back in belting Harry right across the face.

"Vernon, we better listen to the boy," said Petunia and Vernon just grunted, before he lead his wife inside, with Harry and Dudley following behind.

Vernon quickly turned to Harry, but Harry just stood in front of Vernon, with a calm smirk.

"If it makes you better, take another crack at beating it out of me, Vernon," taunted Harry. "But before you do, I do wonder if Dumbledore even bothered to explain why I was left here in the first place."

"No, he never bothered, he just said we needed to keep you or they're will be consequences," said Petunia. "If it was up to me, I would dumped you in a back alley where your kind belongs."

"Boy, it seems to me like that you know why you were left here," said Vernon.

"Indeed and why Voldemort killed my parents in the first place," retorted Harry. "Basically, someone made a prophecy that said Voldemort's greatest threat would be born at the end of July, someone who would be his equal in power. Voldemort heard the prophecy and attacked my parents, a magical backlash when he attempted to kill me wiped out, and I ended up here."

"Of all the rubbish things, this Moldiwart or whatever this Dark Lord freak's name is, believed some kook of a fortune teller!" thundered Vernon. "It just goes to show you that your entire kind should be burnt at the stake and..."

"Why did Dumbledore send you here of all places?" demanded Petunia, as she cut her husband off in mid rant. "Surely, another freak family would gladly take you in, after all, you defeated the most powerful dark wizard in some time. They would gladly call you their son and our family wouldn't be burdened by your unnaturalness."

"What did Dumbledore tell you?" asked Harry.

"He said we were obligated to take you in for your own safety and he would know if we attempted to get rid of you," responded Petunia. "There would be consequences if we did and I grudgingly agreed to take you again, against my better judgment."

"I wanted nothing to do with it, I suggested that we drop you off and have our names changed, before moving out of the country," chimed in Vernon.

"They would have still found us, Vernon," argued Petunia before she turned to Harry. "Never mind that, what was the reason that Dumbledore told you that you were left here?"

"Dumbledore told me that my mother's sacrifice created blood wards around the house and that as long as I called this place home, they would remain up and no one who meant me any harm could come onto the property," said Harry.

"Yes, did Dumbledore ever once consider the fact that Voldemort taking blood from you might have invalidated those so called wards?" questioned Petunia and Harry did a double take.

"Aunt Petunia, exactly how did you know about that?" asked Harry.

"Every time you've gotten into one of your little misadventures at that school, Dumbledore's sent me a letter," answered Petunia and even Vernon looked a bit astonished at this. "During that particular letter, he reinforced the need that I need to allow you to stay here, no matter why. I wouldn't have read them, if I didn't fear that some freak might show up here and questioned me about the contents. I want to be prepared and I learned more about your time at that freak school than I ever cared to know."

"Dumbledore's leaving everything up to chance, he's operating under the hope that Voldemort thinks there are better protections where I live," muttered Harry.

"Well if you ask me, boy, all of your kind are cracked in the head!" yelled Vernon. "This Voldemort bloke or whatever that freak is called, could show up in the middle of the night and kill us all in our sleep, just because some crackpot of a Headmaster decided to take a chance. And another thing, where's your Ministry of Magic in all of this? If you were threatened by a dangerous fugitive in the normal world, our government would offer around the clock protection."

"From what I hear, they're in disarray," said Harry. "They spent an entire year pretending that Voldemort didn't come back, until their hands were forced."

"Crackpots, the whole lot of them!" yelled Vernon. "They deserve there world to be wiped that Lord Moldyduck guy, it would serve them right and I have half the mind to kick you out right now."

"Yes, I'd like to see you try, Vernon," said Harry and Vernon raised his fist in mid air but in a second, Vernon was blasted backwards, nearly rattling the entire house.

"What did you do to him?" screeched Petunia as she stepped forward but seemed to be unable to move.

"I've been people push me around for too long, it's time that I started pushing back," said Harry. "The Harry Potter the world has known is long dead, the loveable Gryffindor golden boy who was the bastion of all things good and also a naïve little nitwit might as well have died that night in the Department of Mysteries as well."

In an instant, Vernon and Petunia were in shackles, unable to move.

"You can't just use magic on us, they'll expel you," replied Petunia in a horrified voice.

"The Ministry can only track magic from my wand," said Harry. "Not once have I used my wand today."

"Let us out freak or I'll beat you within an inch of your life!" demanded Vernon.

"The thing about wandless magic that it's impossible unless you have an extraordinary amount of willpower and as someone who has thrown off the Imperius Curse and possession of Voldemort, I have that willpower," lectured Harry. "We're taught that it's a myth, because quite frankly, they want us to depend on their wands, because they can easily monitor what magic we do that way."

"Please let my parents go, Harry," pleaded Dudley, speaking up for the first time and he sounded legitimately horrified.

"I'm not a child you can just stuff in a cupboard and forget about anymore," continued Harry, as he laid his wand down on the table, before he turned to the Dursleys, the full intent to put them under a mild Confundus spell. "You will forget everything I have told you today, you will not acknowledge my existence at any time other than meals or if one of my kind asks you about me."

"We will forget everything you have told us today, we will not acknowledge your existence at any time other than meals or when one of your kind asks about you," chorused the Dursleys and Harry turned to Dudley.

"I sure hope I don't have to make sure you fall in line, Big D," remarked Harry.

"No of course not Harry, we're cool," stammered Dudley. "I'll stay out of your way and you stay out of mine, the best way to do things, wouldn't you say?"

"Could there actually be a brain lurking between those ears, Dud?" muttered Harry as he unshackled Vernon and Petunia, before he went along on his merry way.

Harry's memories faded again and Harry chanced a look at Hermione before they switched over. His friend gave an approving nod at the fact that the Dursleys were taught a lesson, even if it was just only a small one. The real revenge came was to come the second time around.

Harry had all of his books over the first five years of Hogwarts textbooks, taking notes of things that he might be useful to brush up on and also giving some thought on how some of the spells could be used to injure Death Eaters.

A soft pop echoed through Harry's room and a very familiar face appeared in front of Harry.

"Kreacher," said Harry darkly, as he surveyed the house elf with a neutral expression, bordering on slight hatred for the role he played in Sirius's death.

"Young master, Kreacher is here to bring a message, despite the fact that he much rather be the elf of Mistress Bella or Mistress Cissy" declared Kreacher with a bow. "But, it is Kreacher's sworn duty to let Master Harry Potter know that he has inherited the Most Noble and Ancient House of Black after the premature demise of the blood traitor son of Kreacher's dear Mistress."

Kreacher paused, but Harry nodded, giving Kreacher the office to continue.

"The head of the blood traitors, half bloods, and misfits, wanted to delay young master from finding out this information, as he wanted to sweep the house to get rid of anything that he would believe would sway Master Harry Potter from the path that he intended," continued Kreacher.

"I see," said Harry. "Kreacher, there wouldn't happen to be any books that might be considered to be questionable by Dumbledore, would there be?"

"The blood traitor matron and her brat cleared out over half of the books, but Mistress was clever, she hid a good portion of her books, only telling Kreacher," answered the house elf. "Does Master Harry intend to deviate from the path set by the blood traitor Headmaster?"

"You are to bring me the books Kreacher and you will tell no one that I have them or they've been moved, don't even hint about that you know of any other books other than the one's that they've already found," ordered Harry and Kreacher felt compelled to agree.

The scene shifted to the Hogwarts Express just before Harry's sixth year at Hogwarts.

"Harry, how are you holding up after what happened?" asked a calm voice and Harry looked up, as he saw Luna Lovegood enter the train compartment, with Neville Longbottom following close behind.

"I'm doing as well as could be expected, thanks," remarked Harry.

"The pain never does go away Harry," said Luna. "It only gets worse when you shove it to the backburner."

Neville seemed rather quiet for a minute, before he leaned forward.

"She's ruined both of our lives Harry," muttered Neville.

"I know, she'll get hers in the end," replied Harry. "Sirius got cleared a few weeks after his death, when new evidence came to life, presented by Albus Dumbledore. I just wish he would have been alive to see his freedom."

"In a perfect world he would have," said Luna wisely.

"This is not a perfect world, Luna, far from it," said Harry darkly and Luna nodded in agreement.

"Sadly yes, I just wish Dumbledore would have found out this evidence sooner," replied Harry bitterly.

"It's not like the Ministry would have listened anyway," answered Luna.

"They never listen, but they aren't the problem, hell they are the only the third worst element that is causing problems in my life," said Harry.

"One would think Voldemort would be the worst but judging from your tone regarding Professor Dumbledore, you're not his biggest fan," said Luna and Harry nodded. "I'm sure you have your reasons Harry, I've always thought something was a bit off about Dumbledore at any rate."

"There never used to be, Dumbledore used to be a great wizard, at least that's what Gran told me," chimed in Neville.

"Dumbledore is a great wizard," replied Harry. "No question about that, but I'm not so certain I could trust him anymore, especially after last year."

"Who can you trust anymore, Harry?" inquired Luna.

"I've been asking that question, there are few people that I know I can trust and two of them are sitting in this room," said Harry. "You two

proved that when you went with me to the Department of Mysteries, when you weren't obligated to."

"We would have done it again, Harry," replied Neville firmly and Luna just smiled at Harry, reassuring him of the same thing without words.

"I'm surprised not to see Ginny sitting in here with you, from what I've heard she's not a prefect so she doesn't have other duties like Ronald or Hermione," said Luna unexpectedly.

"Oh, she went off with Dean Thomas, they're dating apparently," replied Harry.

"You do know she's trying to make you jealous Harry," said Luna.

"Of what?" asked Harry in a confused voice.

"Well she still likes you I suspect, so she's using other boys to make you notice her," explained Luna bluntly. "It's the oldest trick in the book and indeed, one of the cheapest, used often by people who aren't all that open minded and willing to think outside the box."

"She's wasting her time, if you ask me, for one, she only been able to talk to me coherently last year and secondly, I can't look past that crush she had on the Boy-Who-Lived before she even met the real me," said Harry. "I'm sure Ginny's a nice enough person, but it's not like I really know her all that well and besides, if she is dating other people to make me jealous, than I'll be even less inclined to like her as anything other than a friend. Still, if I ever date someone again and I'm not really in too much of a hurry after my doomed romance with Cho last year, it will be someone who can look past this."

Harry significantly tapped the lightning bolt scar on his head.

"People have a tough time looking past the fame to the person within, the true face of Harry, they think of you as a hero, someone who is what fairy tales are made of," said Luna. "Granted, I've heard the stories, but I never really paid too much attention until we became friends last year and I got to know a bit about the real Harry Potter."

"Yeah the only difference between me and every other teenager in the world is that I've got a psychotic dark lord who wants to kill me," replied Harry darkly. "Still, it's not gong to end until one of us is dead."

"There really is no other way, is there?" asked Neville.

"No, and maybe someday I'll tell you why," said Harry. "Not today."

"Yes, it may be difficult to explain to others when everything is not is not even clear to you Harry," said Luna. "Perhaps this year will be one that will give some answers."

"I just have this feeling that those answers will raise more questions," concluded Harry. "Still this year can't be any worse than last year."

Harry's memories faded into the Gryffindor Common Room.

"How are we viewing this if you aren't there?" whispered Hermione. "You would think you couldn't remember..."

"I'm under the Invisibility Cloak, I'm reading and don't want to get bothered" said Harry. "It works even in cloaking people in memories but let us listen to this memory, because it's both rather important."

Two red haired teenagers walked around the Gryffindor Common Room in the early hours of the morning.

"Ron, I don't think there's anyone here," muttered Ginny but Ron looked from side to side.

"You can never be too careful," replied Ron. "If Harry finds out..."

"He can't find out," said Ginny sadly. "Do you really think he might turn dark?"

"Mum told me that Dumbledore thinks it's a possibility, after what happened to Sirius," answered Ron. "Harry's been a bit different this year, a bit colder, a bit more distant."

"Yes, he is, he didn't even react when I told him that I was going off with Dean," said Ginny. "He quit the Quidditch team too this year, saying that he need to prepare but he never really told me what."

"It's You-Know-Who that's gotten Harry all rattled, and Dumbledore's afraid that in his obsession to stop him, Harry will turn away from us," said Ron remorsefully. "Still, if he marries into a family who would never go dark, then they can keep an eye on him, make sure he doesn't go over the edge and that's where you come in Ginny."

"Ron, I told you, no matter how hard I try, Harry hasn't shown the slightest bit of interest in me," hissed Ginny under her breath. "I hate to admit it, but he is a lot more comfortable with Hermione and even Luna. I don't understand it, they were never possessed by You-Know-Who, what could Harry have in common with them?"

"Harry has been a bit of an idiot, but Mum gave me something that she told me should only be used as a last case scenario," responded Ron. "I had a few doubts, considering how well Harry was able to throw off the Imperius Curse, but it was brewed by Dumbledore himself, so it has to work."

"What is it?" inquired Ginny.

"A love potion, an extremely powerful one, if you give it to him, he'll be madly in love with you," explained Ron.

"Yes, Ron, I'm well aware of what a love potion does," answered Ginny dryly. "And I really don't think it's a good idea..."

"It's perfect Ginny, Harry doesn't turn dark, he'll eventually marry into the family, and since you've always liked him, everyone wins," said Ron.

"Yes and if something goes wrong with Harry finding out, I blow any chance that I would have with him, so now do you understand why this isn't a good idea?" asked Ginny.

"C'mon Ginny, this plan is fool proof, Harry doesn't know what he wants, we need to help him, unless you want him to live in misery the rest of his life," argued Ron.

"No, I want Harry to be happy and it's what I've always dreamed about since I first heard his story," said Ginny. "I just wish there was another way."

"Believe me Ginny, I do too," answered Ron, who looked proud. In his mind, he was doing both his best mate and little sister a huge favor with the help of Dumbledore and his mother. "But, Dumbledore doesn't think there's any other way we can help Harry, so this is what has to be done."

Harry's memories flashed forward one day.

At breakfast that day, Ginny edged towards Harry, slowly, the vial that Ron gave her concealed up her sleeve and looked over at his drink before she prepared to make her move when she thought Harry was looking.

In an instant, Harry's hand had shot out, grabbing Ginny's wrist, catching the fifth year girl by surprise.

"Morning, Ginny," said Harry casually. "Fancy meeting you here, don't you usually sit over somewhere else?"

"Hi, Harry," answered Ginny as she paled when she saw Harry was staring directly at the vial in her hand. "Look Harry I can explain..."

"What, the fact that you tried to slip me a love potion in my drink?" asked Harry calmly. "Don't bother I..."

"Ginny Weasley, how dare you attempt to try a low and underhanded tactic like that!" yelled Hermione as she leaned in forward, glaring angrily at Ginny. "There better be a good explanation for this, because this is a new low. Even I didn't think you were this obsessed with Harry..."

"I'm not," said Ginny who looked absolutely terrified she was caught but Harry wouldn't let her go. "Okay, the truth is Harry, you need someone who understands what it's like to have him messing with your head and I really am only looking out what's best for you."

“What’s best for me Ginny?” asked Harry calmly. “You think you have any right to say what’s best for me when you still can’t look past that accursed mark on my forehead.”

“Please Harry, I shouldn’t have tried to do that, it’s just it was for your own good, I can make you happy if you just give me a chance,” stammered Ginny.

“What is this about Ginny, the fame, the money?” asked Hermione coldly.

“No, nothing like that, I just want Harry, he’s too good for anyone else and he saved me in the Chamber of Secrets, I love him, I know he feels the same way, he’s just confused about how to express it,” said Ginny quickly. “I just decided to be a good friend and give him help, point his emotions in the right direction.”

“What’s going on here?” asked Ron who was late for breakfast.

“Your sister is trying to force-feed Harry a love potion,” said Hermione.

“Ginny, how dare you?” demanded Ron in overdone outrage, that seemed so over the top that even a five year old go see through it. “Just image what Mum would say, you attempting to drug Harry under his own will, you’ll be some sort of scarlet woman.”

“Oh save it Ron!” snapped Ginny angrily. “You’re the one who talked me into doing it against my better judgment.”

“Ron, is this true?” whispered Hermione, who looked shocked and absolutely appalled that Ron would talk his sister into doing such a thing.

“Yes,” replied Ron. “Harry, listen to me mate, I don’t see what you’d have to lose, Ginny wasn’t going to use you for anything like the others would have, she’s just concerned and quite frankly I am too.”

Harry stared at Ron, wondering if he had always been this thick.

“Mate, are you there?” asked Ron. “We’re just concerned, you might be tempted to...”

"Leave me alone," replied Harry. "You chose to believe him without even talking to me, shows what kind of friend you are, Ronald Weasley. We're done!"

Ron looked utterly bewildered at what Harry was talking about as he turned his back on Ron, pretending he didn't exist but Hermione looked at Ron, never had she been more angry in her life.

"Ron, I can't believe you, the fact you played a part in doing that to Harry," said Hermione, as she held her wand out angrily.

"So, you're going to take Harry's side over mine," replied Ron, his temper rising.

"Yes, at least I know enough that Harry doesn't like people attempting to make his decisions for him," said Hermione.

"You can't choose him over me!" shouted Ron.

"Why not?" challenged Hermione.

"Hermione, I love you," replied Ron but that was the wrong thing to say as Hermione slapped him as hard as she could right across the face.

"You can go to hell, Ronald Weasley!" yelled Hermione, as she rubbed slightly stung hand. "Harry, I'm heading to class, if you want to come with me.."

"Yes, that would be best," replied Harry in a strained voice as he followed Hermione out of the Great Hall with Ron looking dumbstruck and Ginny putting her head in her arms in absolute frustration.

"That basically strained our friendship beyond all repair that day," explained Harry. "We tried to remain as civil as possible to Ron and Ginny, but we didn't go out of our way to interact with them."

Hermione stood transfixed, Harry wasn't kidding that the worst was yet to come. Yet there were more memories to come as Harry's recollections faded out to several hours later.

"Those traitorous, they believed Dumbledore, Dumbledore, it's always down to Dumbledore, don't they realize he's not always right?" ranted Harry, to no one in particular as he sat in the Room of Requirement but at that second Luna made her way inside.

"Oh, hi, Harry, fancy meeting you here," replied Luna.

"Afternoon Luna, forgive me if I'm not in a good mood," said Harry.

"You have every right to not be happy right now, people who you thought were your friends did something that you felt betrayed you," responded Luna. "I'd be absolutely furious if it was me."

"It's just you think you know someone," voiced Harry.

"I thought I knew Ginny, I never thought she'd go that far to attempt to make you like her," said Luna quietly. "Shows how much I know, maybe I should have been more perceptive."

"Luna, you couldn't have known, this is not your fault, it's their fault for taking Dumbledore's word just because he's Dumbledore," answered Harry. "The thing is, they didn't really do it out of malice, they thought it was for my own good but how would I know if they wouldn't have ended up sticking a knife in my back if Dumbledore had said a few well chosen words?"

"Dumbledore obviously thinks he's looking out for your best interests but what he thinks and what is reality doesn't always quite match up," said Luna.

"Tell me about it," remarked Harry. "What were you doing out here anyway, Luna?"

"Oh some of my possessions have mysteriously disappeared again," said Luna as if this didn't bother her at all. "It's gotten worse, at first, it was just because I acted a bit different, but now that I'm friends with you, it's changed."

"I'm sorry," retorted Harry.

"Don't be, you weren't the one who stole my things," said Luna. "They just can't understand why someone who is famous would hang out with someone who is loony, like me."

"Luna, you're perfectly normal," lectured Harry and Luna raised her eyebrow. "Okay, maybe a tiny bit eccentric, but there's nothing wrong with that, after all my relatives are what is considered to be normal and I would have to hex you if you acted like that."

"You don't get along with them too much, do you Harry?" asked Luna.

"That's putting it mildly but I really shouldn't burden you with my problems Luna," said Harry. "I can help you look for your things."

"Really, Harry, there's no need for you to do that, I can manage on my own," argued Luna but Harry reached before, placing his hand on Luna's.

"Nonsense, that's what friends are for," replied Harry with a genuine smile.

The memory seemed to abruptly cut out for some reason and Hermione looked at Harry quizzically, but Harry had a far off look in his eyes.

"Harry?" asked Hermione.

"You've seen everything you needed to know in that memory, next one," replied Harry as if nothing seemed to be the matter.

The scene faded out to the kitchen in Number Twelve Grimmauld Place, with the members of the Order of the Phoenix sitting around the table and Harry walked inside, having been lead inside by Nymphadora Tonks, who averted her eyes towards the ceiling, as if a bit embarrassed that she was talked into playing messenger for Dumbledore so Harry could come here.

"Tonks, told me that you wished to see me, Professor Dumbledore," prompted Harry in an emotionless tone of voice, this was the first time he had a face to face confrontation with Dumbledore since the night he was told the prophecy.

"Yes, I did Harry, I wished to speak to you about your recent falling out with your friends," said Dumbledore kindly.

"What are you talking about Professor?" replied Harry innocently. "I'm getting along perfectly with Luna, Hermione, and Neville."

"I was referring to the two youngest Weasleys, Harry," said Dumbledore calmly. "I do apologize for forcing them into that position; I may have been a bit hasty of me."

Harry just sat in front of Dumbledore, his arms and legs folded, not even blinking.

"Yes, Harry, we've all been concerned for you, especially after what happened with Sirius," added Molly Weasley who looked a bit nervous at this cold indifference from Harry. She could perfectly deal with children who yelled and screamed their heads off, but a calm, calculating one was something different. "We're just don't want you to choose to walk down a dangerous path in life."

"No, you don't want me to think for myself and not follow the gospel according to Albus Dumbledore to the letter," corrected Harry. "No need to lie, I'm not an idiot."

"No one said you were, Harry," said Dumbledore. "It's just we're concerned for your welfare and want what's best for you."

"Keep telling yourself that Albus, and eventually it will come true," said Harry.

"Harry, I can't let you get away with talking to Professor Dumbledore in this house," admonished Molly but Harry just turned to Remus.

"Hi, Remus, how have you been holding up lately?" asked Harry, ignoring Molly's outburst, something else that she wasn't used to.

"As good as can be expected," said Remus, taken him aback.

"Could you do me a favor and inform everyone exactly who Sirius left this house to?" suggested Harry.

"To you, of course, Harry, along with everything else," informed Remus.

"Thank you Remus," said Harry gratefully before he turned to Dumbledore. "Now, I'm sure there's a reason that you've called me here."

"Yes, I did, Harry," responded Dumbledore. "I feel that considering the role you are destined to play that you would join the Order of the Phoenix a year earlier than you might have previously."

Harry sat there, staring at Dumbledore.

"No, Harry, I can assure you this is not a joke," added Dumbledore.

"You seem fond of telling me things that I have to work hard to put together the pieces, Professor, so let me tell you a story and I'll let you figure out how it relates to me," said Harry. 'It starts with a young girl, she had a bit of a hard life you see, came from a tough neighborhood and wished for something different, something better. Then along comes the man of her dreams, someone who she feels is perfect, he's almost too good to be true but she doesn't think about it too hard. Rather the troubled girl sees her way out and pursues a relationship with this perfect man. Eventually they're married."

Harry paused for the briefest of seconds.

"Over time, the girl starts noticing small imperfections in her love, things that make the man of her dreams less perfect than she had first thought," continued Harry. "He might have had a few too many drinks and they've had a heated argument where she gets slapped around a little bit. Signs that she should get out of this relationship why she still can, the man doesn't seem to appreciate her as much as he should. Still, she reconciles everything will get better, besides he loves her. Despite the darkness in the man, the girl feels that she either has to stick with him or go back to the cruel world that she has come from."

Everyone seemed silent which gave Harry the office to continue.

"Things didn't get better, they got much worse over the years, to the point where the love was most certainly gone, the girl was being battered on a constant basis, yet she still deluded herself that he loved her," said Harry. "Deluded to the point where she felt her only obligation in life was to spread her legs like a common street hooker for the distinct pleasure of the man. The man kept asking things of her, giving nothing of concerned, and she gave him her life, her body, her soul, and her mind, sacrificing it all. She didn't want to go back to the other world, but she had been stripped of all of her humanity. Her purpose in life had become that of a mindless whore, until she eventually drank herself to death."

Harry finished the store, no emotion on his face and several of the female members of the Order of the Phoenix were crying, with several of the men also looking appalled.

"What are you trying to say Harry?" questioned Dumbledore who had obviously not gotten the meaning of what Harry was trying to say.

"Figure it out Professor," concluded Harry as he walked out of the room, careful not to turn his back on any of the members of the Order until he was safely out of spell distance.

Another shift in memories, this time ending up in the Headmaster's office a few weeks before the sixth year of Hogwarts ended.

"Good evening, Professor Dumbledore," said Harry politely.

"Ah, good evening Harry, it has been some time since we last met," responded Dumbledore. "It saddens me to say that you still haven't forgiven your friends for doing what they thought was necessary."

"Yes, just like Peter Pettigrew did what he thought was necessary when he sold out my parents to Voldemort," said Harry. "Look, I'm as social as possible when dealing with them but it's best if we don't talk."

"You should not allow minor disagreements drive a wedge between friends," argued Dumbledore. "Ron and Ginny are good people, a bit hot tempered yet, but perhaps it would be best if you give them a chance. The love potion was something that was a huge mistake."

"And perhaps it might be best if you don't psychoanalyze me, Professor Dumbledore," responded Harry. "It's not because of the bloody love potion that I'm not talking about them, it's because they followed your word that I might be going dark."

"So, you're punishing your friends because you don't like me, Harry," said Dumbledore.

"No, Professor, it wouldn't be a problem if I didn't like you," countered Harry. "The fact is I don't trust you and that's much worse in my book."

"What have I done to deserve such mistrust?" inquired Dumbledore, a twinkle in his eye that Harry wasn't buying for a second.

"Let's see, you withheld the prophecy from me, you keep sending me back to relatives that obviously hate me, for someone who is said to know everything that goes on at this school you seem blissfully ignorant with anything that puts me in peril until the last possible second, you didn't do a better job at looking in the Secret Keeper situation, you've done nothing to prepare me for the inevitable battle with Voldemort, leaving everything to chance," said Harry quickly. "Do I need to continue?"

"No, Harry, you've said plenty," said Dumbledore gravely. "Perhaps if I tell you the reason I thought you were going dark, it might shed some light about the actions I had Ronald and Ginevra take."

"I'm listening," said Harry stiffly.

"While you managed to force Lord Voldemort out of your mind when he attempted to possess you, I fear that he might have left you susceptible to his influence, the connection between you two becoming stronger by the moment," said Dumbledore.

"Is that a theory or do you have proof to back it up?" challenged Harry.

"I attempted to look into your mind and I was forced out Harry," replied Dumbledore. "Professor Snape told me that you had no talent for Occlumency, so there could be no other explanation."

"Snape never tried to teach me the subject, you realize how much time it took me to fix the damage he did, before I began actually trying to protect my mind," fired back Harry.

"I'm surprised Harry, you managed to block my passive attempts but if I actually worked in attempting to break into your mind, I could get through," said Dumbledore. "Harry, what can I do to atone for mistakes?"

"Let me handle Voldemort my way," said Harry calmly as he got to his feet. "I have plenty of homework to do so if there isn't anything else..."

"No there isn't, Harry," concluded Dumbledore.

The scene faded from Dumbledore's office to the smoldering remains of the Burrow.

Harry and Hermione stood outside, in numb shock as they looked at the wreckage.

"I can't believe this," muttered Hermione sadly.

"Yes, Miss Granger, this attack was rather vicious," said Dumbledore who walked into the scene. "We managed to capture several of the Death Eaters who were responsible for this."

"How could you let this happen?" demanded Harry. "You know that the Death Eaters would target them, they are considered to be the biggest blood traitors by Voldemort and his followers."

"Harry, all of the Order's resources were tied up at Privet Drive," explained Dumbledore.

"I thought the blood wards were supposed to keep me safe," responded Harry and Dumbledore seemed at a loss of words. "Never mind another mistake you made, what happened?"

"Well according to the Death Eaters we captured, Ginny, Ron, Fred, George, and Molly Weasley were all inside," informed Dumbledore. "Molly was slaughtered in seconds by Bellatrix Lestrange, Ron and

Ginny followed soon later, they attempted to fight many Death Eaters head on. Fred and George managed to incapacitate several Death Eaters but they fell eventually, before the Death Eaters torched the Burrow with their bodies inside. The other Weasleys are being informed and they're under the protection of the Order, because I fear Voldemort will come after them."

"Yes, that seems to be about right, they just proved my point that they were foolish in putting their trust in you," said Harry. "I might have been odds with certain Weasleys, but none of them deserved to be killed. You should have seen it coming."

Dumbledore surveyed Harry, words failing him.

"Until we meet again, Professor," continued Harry as he walked off with Hermione, not knowing that this would be the last time that he would be seeing Dumbledore in this timeline.

The scene shifted to Grimmauld Place.

"This was his plan all along Harry," said Hermione. "We were the six who foiled his plans to gain the Prophecy and he made plans to attack us all."

"I just wish I would have found you in time," chimed in Luna, her voice uncharacteristically serious. "They got to Neville, I just barely managed to survive, Dad wasn't so lucky, if I had done more, if I would have thought quicker, both of them would have been alive."

"Luna, you did the best you could, but if I had been at the Burrow, if I hadn't fell out with the Weasleys, they might still be alive," said Harry.

"Honestly, you two were made each for other, I swear!" said Hermione.

"If your parents were attacked Hermione, you'd be saying the same thing," argued Harry and Luna nodded in agreement by his side.

"No, I suggested that they should get out of the country and reluctantly they did, I told them that I'd come look for them when

Voldemort's been killed," said Hermione as she lifted up her wand to turn on the WIZARDING WIRELESS.

"This just in, Albus Dumbledore has been executed for high crimes of treason towards the Ministry of Magic," announced a cold voice over the Wireless. "Dumbledore attempted to go into hiding, but Severus Snape proved his sworn duty to all that is pure by informing the Ministry of Albus Dumbledore's location, allowing a group of witches and wizards to remove this cancerous spot on the Wizarding World. Several of his Order of the Phoenix members fought, but they were brought to justice. Several others peacefully surrendered and they were brought to Azkaban where they would later be educated."

Harry sat, glaring into the distance with hatred. There was no mistake who that cold, high, wicked voice over the radio belonged too.

"Three fugitives remain at large, Luna Lovegood, Hermione Granger, and Harry Potter," continued the cold voice. "If you've encountered these three, they are a danger to the world we live in and their whereabouts should be handed right over to the Ministry of Magic immediately. Anyone caught harboring these fugitives will be dealt with harshly."

The current Harry's eyes were red, viewing these memories were both therapeutic and frustrating at the same time.

"We later found out he took over the Ministry on that day and everything else folded soon after," concluded Harry darkly. "Throughout the next few years, we fought Lord Voldemort and his followers, and you know how the story ends."

"All you went through Harry, it's just...you have to start all over again," said Hermione.

"I do, but this time I'll be ready for Voldemort, I won't let him take over," said Harry firmly. "There is much more, but I can't let you view those, I don't want you to be warped for life, Hermione but I gave you a clear picture in some places and a general overview of what I can't show you."

“I just hope that it doesn’t end that way this time,” said Hermione quietly, she just seemed to be taking in what she learned and a part of her wished she wouldn’t have asked Harry to tell her everything. “It’s just too much, I’d hate to see you have to live that again.”

“Yes, I got my second chance to finish Voldemort,” concluded Harry. “I didn’t want it, but I got it. I just hope I won’t have a need for a third chance.”

Chapter Seventeen: Hogwarts or Bust

In the guest room that night, Hermione laid her head on the pillow, unable to sleep and tears silently streamed down her face, the more she thought about what Harry had to do. It wasn't fair that Harry was the only one that was able to stop the most dangerous wizards in the world by himself. From what Hermione could gather from Harry, he had taken steps to forestall Voldemort's return to power but she wondered if it would be enough.

The time travel accident put Harry back for a reason, giving him a second chance. Normally Hermione felt she would have been absolutely mortified if someone had knowledge of what was to come, but she saw what Harry had to do. Harry did point out a couple times that if didn't matter how many times he had to live this life, beating Voldemort would not be a simple task. He would do what he could to change the world for a better but still Voldemort stood, looming in the horizon. Harry had eliminated the method Voldemort used to return to life the last time, but someone who had traveled the world like Voldemort no doubt learned a few more tricks, some that Harry could not have imagined in her wildest dreams.

Harry had given her a picture of what happened, showed her some things that were in a way disturbing and hinted that some of his past, or alternate future technically, was too disturbing to show. Hermione resolved to live up the standard of her future counterpart, sticking by Harry no matter what. It wouldn't be the easiest thing to do but it sure was the right thing to do.

Harry sat in his room, absent mindedly going through last year's financial records, but not really paying all that much attention to them at all. Hermione had taken what she had seen much better than he could have ever expected. While Hermione knew everything that was necessary to understand what had to be done. Harry would be damned if the story ended the same way, but he was prepared for the very real possibility that his actions could end up making everything worse, despite his best intentions. He tried to keep these thoughts to the back of his mind and resolved to do what he believed needed to be done.

Alas, some things were out of Harry's hands, but he resolved to change what he could, doing what was necessary to sculpt a better future for himself and his friends. He had to defeat Voldemort this time, there wasn't any trying, he had to defeat Voldemort no matter what it took or he would be what a majority of the Wizarding World branded him as the first time around. A scared little boy longing for Mummy and Daddy who was nothing without Albus Dumbledore pulling the strings behind him, a brand that Harry despised with every fiber of being but the accusations were there.

Harry didn't believe in fate, but he did believe in justice. Dumbledore learned it, Crouch learned it, as did Snape and Malfoy, even Fudge.

Some aspects of his past Harry didn't dwell on. His friends would be okay, he never meant to seek them out until Hogwarts, the fact that he and Hermione met early wasn't in Harry's plans, it just was an unintentional side effect of the time line distortion. Other things would work themselves out, hopefully for the better, the changes Harry made would have effects that would invalidate tragedies. Despite what he had done, certain things Harry couldn't change no matter how much he wanted to without concrete information like dates that may have changed because of the changes made all ready. One event in particular entered Harry's mind but he didn't know if the circumstances would have played out the same. It seemed possible but highly unlikely as so much of the Wizarding World had changed as a domino effect of Harry's alterations.

Thoughts of her also were driven to Harry's mind, that he forced back as far from his conscious thought as possible. It was something that Harry would not dwell on, he wouldn't dare hope, because of his unique circumstances, Harry didn't quite feel comfortable having a relationship beyond friendship with anyone. Besides, even if he somehow found a good reason to put his moral obligations aside, Harry reasoned it would be foolish to dwell on what happened and what might have happened with them, because he would not drive himself mad with hope that they would connect the same way again, despite how much deep down he still cared.

Putting these borderline angsty thoughts out of his head, Harry put away his financial records before he got into his makeshift bed on the

side of his office and drifted off into a very uneasy nights of sleep, having a few disturbing nightmares that he hadn't had since the height of Lord Voldemort's reign of terror.

A year had passed since that night, and it was August, nearly a month before Hogwarts was to begin and Narcissa had just returned from taking her son shopping for his school supplies and had returned to the modest home that she had purchased in Hogsmeade.

"Cissy, it's been too long," said a calm voice and Narcissa sighed, she hated when her sister had dropped by unexpectedly.

"Hello, Bella, what are you doing here?" asked Narcissa cautiously, as Bellatrix's presence was always a negative influence on her son, she had attempted to continue the warping of Draco's mind that Lucius had started, to some degree of success. Narcissa didn't care for muggleborns, half bloods, and blood traitors for any means, but she wasn't going to force her views on her son, preferring that he make up his own mind through his experiences rather than what he heard.

"I'm here to visit my favorite sister but considered the fact that Andromeda ran off with a Mudblood, that really isn't saying much," cackled Bellatrix as her eyes rested on Draco. "Draco, come here and give your Aunt Bellatrix a hug!"

Draco did so but his nose wrinkled slightly, but if Bellatrix noticed, he didn't say anything.

"Sorry I didn't have time to wash my robes, some Muggle attempted to get fresh with me, he learned the hard way, so some of his blood may be splattered on my robes," remarked Bellatrix wickedly before her voice turned to a calm, nearly affectionate tone. "Now Draco, you're to attend Hogwarts this year and it would be good if you understand your role, you have your legacy as a pureblood to uphold, you must be sorted into Slytherin and do not interact with Mudbloods, half bloods, or blood traitors, as they will contaminate you and make you magically weaker. Is that understood?"

"Yes, Aunt Bellatrix," replied Draco.

“Good very good, now run along, your mother and I have something important to discuss that really isn’t suitable for children to hear,” said Bellatrix.

“Yes, go run along Draco, read your new books,” added Narcissa and Draco ran off.

“So, you’re new teaching job is working out well,” said Bellatrix. “You are making sure that the Mudbloods, half bloods, and blood traitors are learning their proper place...”

“Bella, you know very well I can’t show favoritism, Flamel’s watching me closely, I need to toe the line,” replied Narcissa.

“Toe the line, Cissy, what is that old dusty has-been of a wizard going to do to you?” demanded Bellatrix her eyes glinting madly as she rocked back and forth.

“If this plan of the Dark Lord’s were to work, it wouldn’t do good for me to tip anything, a plan you’ve never told me what it was,” said Narcissa.

“The Dark Lord has been very vague, but it’s not our place to question him, it’s our place to follow him and don’t you forget it Cissy!” yelled Bellatrix who was absolutely hysterical before she calmed down in the blink of an eye and grew suddenly insightful. “Yet, yes, you do raise a good point, the plan does involve Harry Potter, but nothing else, and you do need to remain under Flamel’s radar.”

Bellatrix sat, her eyes blank and looked thoughtful, nearly sane.

“It just isn’t right the Dark Lord should have ruled over the Wizarding World by now, some little brat that wasn’t even out of diapers shouldn’t have stopped him!” sobbed Bellatrix tears flowing from her face before she broke into manic giggles. “Still Harry Potter will suffer, yes he will, the Dark Lord will crush him like the worm he is.”

Bellatrix became calm for a few seconds, before she broke into laughter and then began to sob again, rocking back and forth.

“Bella, are you going to be alright?” asked Narcissa.

"Yes, I'll be fine, Cissy," answered Bellatrix calmly before another shift in her eyes and she suddenly became hysterical. "It's not like you care, it's not like you give a damn anyway! You were always the perfect daughter, the perfect pureblood princess, you were the socially acceptable one, the one that our parents talked about proudly and there was crazy Bellatrix, her unnaturally obsession with the dark arts. I'm happy that Andromeda ran off with that Mudblood, because at least I wasn't the biggest outcast in the family."

Bellatrix sprung up, causing a couple of the windows to break as she looked absolutely insane.

"I hate our mother, Cissy, she never wanted me to be happy!" yelled Bellatrix taking Narcissa back with an unexpected outburst. "That's why she fixed me up with a marriage contract with an impotent little prick who couldn't last ten seconds in the bedroom. He doesn't have the spine for the dark arts either; I was the one who tortured the Longbottoms while Rodolphus cowered in the corner, sucking his thumb like a soiled infant! I deserve a wizard of a higher caliber, someone who doesn't break down and scream in terror when I put the Cruciatus Curse on him. I hate my mother; I hope she dies that old hag!"

"Bella, our mother is dead," replied Narcissa coolly.

"I know Cissy, why did you have to bring that up, do you know how close we were?" demanded Bellatrix before she alternated between manic giggling and crying. "My poor mother, she had so many years left in her life, cut down by an Auror who had mistaken her for a follower of the Dark Lord. Come on Narcissa, let's go down the Ministry and kill all the Aurors one by one, that'd make me feel better."

Narcissa looked at her sister, who had a hopeful, nearly childish look on her face.

"Bella, as much as I'd love to help you, I do have lesson plans to draw up for this year at Hogwarts," stated Narcissa.

"Oh yes, of course, Cissy, it's passed me now, talk to you later," said Bellatrix as she excused herself.

Narcissa sighed, her sister needed help big time. While Bellatrix had been a little odd since they were children, her insanity had only escalated since she had joined the Dark Lord and especially after her Azkaban stint. The problem was, Bellatrix would never admit she needed help and Narcissa didn't know exactly where to go to offer her sister help, it would take a large amount of money to get the amount of psychiatric counseling Bellatrix needed.

Quirinus Quirrell sat in his kitchen, enjoying a meal and pleased that next year at Hogwarts, he would be the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. Not only that, but Quirrell had met a wonderful individual who had opened up his eyes towards a whole new world of possibilities. That man was naturally Lord Voldemort and he offered Quirrell a whole new kind of power, if only the young teacher would do one thing, deliver Harry Potter to an undisclosed location by the end of the school year right under the nose of Nicholas Flamel.

Quirrell really didn't have any idea of how he would accomplish this but the power that the Dark Lord promised him would serve as a great inspiration and Quirrell was determined not to let his perspective master down.

Little did Quirrell know that sitting with his back turned on a window, without his wand to defend himself would prove to be the beginning of the end.

A loud bang echoed shattering the window and a barrage of bullets went through the windows, Quirrell slumped against the table before he slid to the kitchen floor.

"Inside, he could have faked being hit, we can't leave anything to chance," ordered a calm voice and the front door swung open to reveal Harry, under the guise of Barone, and his band of merry mobsters.

Indeed, no chances could have been taken, as wizards had developed spells to block gunfire over the years, due mostly towards paranoia that the Muggles might use guns to overrun them on the off chance they found the Wizarding World. It was a small chance, but the majority didn't want to leave any disadvantage, no matter how small to Muggles in any way whatsoever.

“Boss, I think he may be dead,” said one of the mobsters but Barone calmly pulled out the gun and drilled Quirrell in the back of the head three times, before he bent down to check something.

“Damn, he’s not back there,” muttered Barone in a low voice, before he prodded Quirrell with the pimp cane and the wizard shown no signs of movement. “Now, he’s dead, Marella.”

Barone bent down, pulling out his wand, carefully removing and vanishing the bullets before he healed the wounds, he wanted to make this look like an accident after all.

“What exactly were you looking for back there?” wondered Vinny, as he stuck out of Barone’s sleeve to turn his head for side to side.

“Voldemort,” replied Barone with a low hiss. “I really didn’t know whether or not Quirrell would have joined him this time, but once I heard he was in Albania, I had to react right away because there was a chance he could have been seduced by Voldemort again.”

“And if he wasn’t?” questioned Vinny. “You did destroy the Philosopher’s Stone, so he would have no reason.”

“Voldemort might have moved his plans to use me up to restore him to power up by a few years, and besides, I don’t want to take chances, not now, not ever,” replied Barone to the snake. “He did go into the area where Voldemort was known to be hiding, so I just put the pieces together.”

The mobsters looked at Barone for further instruction.

“Make sure there are nothing lying around that can tie this to us, while I finish tying this up,” said Barone and off went his man as he waved his wand repairing the glass, before he pulled a large vial with a triple dose of the luck potion, Felix Felicis before he pried Quirrell’s motionless mouth open and dumped the potion into his mouth, jabbing his wand towards the throat to make his inactive throat muscles swallow the entire potion.

“All cleared up, Boss Potter” informed the mobster called Shoulders.

“Good, very good and don’t use my real name in public,” hissed Barone.

“Right, sorry Mr. Barone,” apologized Shoulders as Barone cleared up the area, removing all traces of finger prints and used a very powerful charm to mask any traces of magic, before he turned to his men.

“Let’s go, business calls,” concluded Barone calmly.

Yaxley walked forward to face the Dark Lord. The Dark Lord sat on a hard looking wooden chair, with a hood pulled up over his face, revealing nothing but slit like red eyes. Yaxley kneeled before the Dark Lord. Seconds passed, before the Dark Lord nodded stiffly to acknowledge Yaxley’s presence.

“My Lord, I went to investigate why Quirrell didn’t arrive at the appointed time and he was found in the kitchen area,” explained Yaxley. “He had died just hours before, it appears that he overdosed on Felix Felicis, the luck potion.”

“Disappointing,” said Voldemort calmly after a few seconds. “But not damning to our plans.”

“My Lord, perhaps if you could enlighten me a bit more on your plans then I could be of service,” suggested Yaxley hopefully but the Dark Lord just looked at Yaxley, his eyes not moving at the slightest for about thirty seconds which caused Yaxley to shiver.

“Yaxley, you have your mission, others have theirs, I prefer not to place all my eggs into one basket,” commented Voldemort icily. “Perhaps you can enlighten me on what you found recently on Barone.”

“My Lord, almost five years of searching and I have no records, other than he purchased some magical businesses, the obvious one being the Daily Prophet,” replied Yaxley. “I had followed some potential leads, but other than his activities over the past five years, I can’t find any record that Allan Michael Barone even exists prior to the Dumbledore trial. Not even the slightest hint my lord, if he’s using any other names, he leaves no hint for them.”

“Interesting,” said Voldemort softly. “Yaxley, Barone is only a small concern, he can be properly dealt with once Harry Potter is used. He will be much more receptive to joining us if his charge has been compromised. The entire empire would collapse if young Harry met a premature demise but I will give them both a chance to serve me.”

“What if Potter or Barone refuses?” inquired Yaxley and Voldemort’s eyes still didn’t move, despite this borderline stupid question from Yaxley.

“Others have refused the Dark Lord, many cave to my will in due time or perish,” answered Voldemort crisply. “Remember Yaxley, failure is not an option and certain parts of my Inner Circle may be purged to eliminate weaknesses. Your inability to acquire more concrete information on Barone is rather disappointing. I expect further results by our next meeting, is that clear?”

Yaxley felt the Dark Lord’s eyes stare into his own and he barely suppressed a shudder, as he wished the Dark Lord would blink more often.

“Yes, my Lord, I will not fail you,” said Yaxley and Voldemort offered no sign of acknowledgement other than calmly raised his arm, pointing towards the door and Yaxley took it as his cue to leave.

During his trip to Albania, Voldemort thought he had a workable plan when he had tracked down the man who was researching to become the new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher, impressing him with what Quirrell perceived to be power but was merely parlor tricks. Quirrell had joined for a taste of the power but obviously he wasn’t what Voldemort needed if he foolishly took a large dose of a potion.

Still, the trip to Albania wasn’t a total loss, as the rare magical items acquired would strengthen the durability and speed of the new body but the blood of Harry Potter would be the final element. Whatever caused Potter to destroy his former body, Voldemort wanted following through his veins, as that would be the one final element to obtain true invincibility.

Gilderoy Lockhart smiled widely as he looked at the completed manuscript of his autobiography, *Magical Me*. The ghost writer he

had paid off did a wonderful job in weaving his life, both the fact and the fiction he took credit for with his years of hard work. Since he erased his ghost writer's memories, it would be like Lockhart had written the book and he would take credit for doing one hundred percent of the work.

He poured a glass of fire whiskey and walked into the sitting room but he stopped when he saw that an imposing looking figure.

"Nice place you have here Lockhart, can't say much about your taste in decoration," commented Barone as he looked around to see at least a hundred, maybe more, framed photos of Lockhart all around him along with several pink, flowery vases.

"Who are you?" demanded Lockhart as he stood in what he thought was a threatening, heroic pose but in reality was rather pathetic.

"Please I've seen three year olds that were more imposing than you are, Lockhart," answered Barone coolly. "The name's Barone, perhaps you've heard of me, I've caused a few Ministry officials to take an extended vacation in Azkaban, threw the entire Floo system in disarray, and caused Dolores Umbridge to get demoted to janitorial duty at the Ministry."

"Ah, Mr. Barone, no need to go on further, I know exactly while you're here," retorted Lockhart pompously. "Naturally, I'd be honored to give to you my complete collection of books, autographed, along with an advanced copy of my highly anticipated autobiography *Magical Me*, once it gets back from the publishers."

"Save it Lockhart, I already have all your books, my snake needs to go to the bathroom somewhere," replied Barone.

"Someone mention me," muttered Vinny sleepily, but it sounded like a mean hiss to Lockhart, who leapt back in terror.

"I'll cut to the chase, I know that you took credit for the work of others, unless you want that fact to slip into the Daily Prophet, along with your grave inaccuracies that Nicholas Flamel kindly sent to me a few years ago, I suggest you do exact what I say and if I even catch you attempting to wipe my memory, I'll give your skull a sun roof," said

Barone as Lockhart held his wand, but quickly put it down, as Barone narrowed his eyes at him.

“What do you want from me?” demanded Lockhart.

“Relax, goldilocks, you’ll find that I’m a fair man, I will let you print your lies if I receive a fair cut of all profits you’ve ever made from your books,” answered Barone. “No less than ninety five percent, yes that should do it.”

Lockhart dropped his jaw.

“But...but...but...” stammered Lockhart.

“Your reputation is on the line Gilderoy,” added Barone as he pulled out a piece of parchment, ink, and a quill. “Just sign your name here, but remember this offer self destructs in thirty seconds and I send out the Daily Prophets detailing your misdeeds.”

Lockhart quickly reached forward and signed the contract without reading it, his reputation obviously worth too much to him.

“Good, nice magically binding contract signed, perhaps I should have also mentioned that you can never can apply for the Defense Against the Dark Arts teaching position at Hogwarts or use your memory charm on anyone else ever again, but alas it’s too late, the legally binding contract is filed at Gringotts,” said Barone.

“Wait, I’ll lose my magic if I break it,” wondered Lockhart.

“Please, Lockhart, you’re magic isn’t enough collateral,” scoffed Barone. “If you break your word, your teeth with rot and not only that, but your hair will fall out. Also, I’ll expose you to the world as the fraud you are.”

Lockhart looked horrified that the fact that his teeth that had won in the Witch Weekly award for Most Charming Smile on five separate occasions were being threatened. He came to one conclusion; this Barone guy was a sick, twisted, individual to threaten such a precious treasure like his smile. The entire magical economy would collapse if Lockhart lost his charming smile!

"It's been a pleasure doing business with you," concluded Barone and in a blink of an eye, Barone had disappeared, leaving Lockhart to lament his woes of being coerced into signing a contract without reading it. He couldn't very well challenge it at Gringotts. The goblins hated Lockhart for some reason, although he couldn't imagine how anyone could hate him.

Harry and Hermione carried their trunks on September First, all excited as it was the day they had been waiting for years had arrived, the first day of Hogwarts. Well, Hermione was a bit more excited than Harry, but still, Harry couldn't help but feel a bit of morbid curiosity at how this time around would differ from the last time. It was a whole new world, with Snape in Azkaban and Dumbledore hopefully in a cardboard box.

Not too many people were on the train yet, as it was nearly a half of an hour before departure but Harry and Hermione wished to be early, as if even a few people in the Wizarding World could do basic math, they would know that Harry would be old enough to start Hogwarts right about now and would have told all their friends. It was a measure to avoid being mobbed by certain people.

They sat in a compartment in the back of the train and Hermione sat down, reading a book on wandless magic.

"Since you have Occlumency down, wandless magic shouldn't be much of a problem, it requires similar will power and concentration, but I'm warning you, it's not easy," remarked Harry. "But a good skill to have if you can manage it, because there is a chance you could lose your wand in a combat situation."

"Yes, most witches and wizards seem to be attached to their wand, like an extra arm," said Hermione as she read the book. "At least that's what it says in this book, but if they lose their wand, they are like a fish out of water."

"Yes, only a few people can seamlessly do magic without your wand, it's a bit of a dodgy skill to learn as far as the Ministry is concerned, as they control fugitives by taking their wands away and snapping them," remarked Harry. "Voldemort obviously can do magic without a wand, Dumbledore too, I would be an idiot to think that Flamel

wouldn't have picked up the skill in the last seven hundred or so years. A couple of Aurors may have thumbed their nose at the Ministry and tried to learn the skill, Moody seems to come to mind as a candidate, as he's so paranoid, I can't believe that he would be secure in relying just on his wand and maybe a few Death Eaters, but less than a dozen when you come down to those who can do it well enough to make a difference."

"Yes, it says in here that it's drilled in the heads of students from day one that wands are necessary, to stunt their potential to use wandless magic," remarked Hermione.

"Somehow that didn't apply to me but considering I survived the killing curse, produced a patronus that drove off a hundred Dementors, and threw off the Imperius Curse when I was fourteen, I guess the fact I was to ignore all the teachers constant talk about how wands were necessary," said Harry. "Of course, I really didn't pay too much attention in school the first time around, which came back to haunt me, but this one time it worked to my favor."

Hermione nodded, as she went back to her reading and Harry pulled out an advanced text on the History of the Unforgivable Curses, disguised as a notebook, and began to read it.

Nearly twenty minutes later, with both Harry and Hermione deeply in their books, hearing the sound of approaching steps from outside and Harry pulled himself to his feet and peered out the glass.

"What is it Harry?" asked Hermione.

"Ron Weasley is coming this way," whispered Harry. "No doubt his mother suggested that we would be friends, most likely on the request of Dumbledore long ago."

"So, what should we do Harry?" asked Hermione who wasn't too fond of young Mr. Weasley for his betrayal of Harry.

"Act natural, as far as he knows, we have no reason to hate him in this timeline," muttered Harry. "Give him one chance, even if it would be just to hang himself."

Hermione nodded stiffly, biting the inside of her lip, which Harry knew meant she was trying very hard not to lose her temper at the mere idea of trying to be sociable with Ron Weasley.

The door opened and a very nervous looking Ron walked inside.

“Uh...hello, can I sit here?” asked Ron.

“Free country,” replied Hermione casually, but her eyes never left the book she was reading and Ron sat down on an empty seat.

“So, anyway, I’m Ron Weasley and I’ve been looking for Harry Potter, because Mum thinks he should have positive influences and should not be allowed to fall to the dark, because Dumbledore said he would if someone from a nice family didn’t befriend him,” remarked Ron.

“Wait, you’re looking for Harry Potter?” inquired Harry. “He wouldn’t happen to be a kid about our age with a lightning bolt scar on his head, vanquished You-Know-Who when he was a young lad.”

“Yes, that’d be him, you must be muggleborn , if you just heard about Harry Potter,” said Ron. “Anyway, I need to find him so we can be best friends forever.”

“I think I might have seen him, fairly good kid, excellent head on his shoulders, looks like he’s going to be sorted into Ravenclaw or maybe Slytherin by the looks of things,” remarked Harry as Hermione tried hard not to break out into laughter as she caught sight of Ron’s face.

“No, he can’t be, I mean, he’s Harry Potter, he would have to be sorted into Gryffindor!” exclaimed Ron in a confident voice.

“And if he changed his name to Bob Jones, could that mean he could be a Slytherin?” demanded Harry. “What makes Gryffindor so great anyway? A house for the brave and the naïve as far as I’m concerned.”

“Dumbledore was sorted in that house,” responded Ron proudly.

"That just lessens the value of Gryffindor if Dumbledore was in it," said Harry and Ron looked mortified but Harry wasn't finished. "Yes, Dumbledore, he is the worst fraud in the entire history of magic, don't think he wouldn't sacrifice your family if it served his greater good. I'm not a naïve pureblood Ronald Weasley, I know what Dumbledore is, he sent Harry Potter to be beaten down by his Muggle relatives so he could be his to mold."

"How do you know?" challenged Ron.

"Because, I'm Harry Potter," whispered Harry.

"Wait, you're Harry Potter!" shrieked Ron in absolute glee, which made Harry wonder who the bigger fangirl was, Ron or Ginny. Right now it looked pretty close. "So do you have the..."

"Patience to deal with blind Dumbledore followers, no I don't," said Harry blandly. "Anyway, Slytherin is looking really good right now, because you'd be a Gryffindor..."

"Harry, all of the dark wizards come out of Slytherin!" argued Ron. "You just have to be in Gryffindor, the entire world is counting on you to be good, I mean name one good person who came out of Slytherin!"

"Mad-Eye Moody," said Harry calmly.

"Well he's a nutter isn't he?" asked Ron who had suddenly felt he didn't care all that much for the legendary Auror now that he heard he had been sorted into Slytherin. "Personally, I'd head straight back to the train if I was put in Slytherin, that Barone guy has been misleading you to these opinions but I want to be your friend. Can't you see that?"

"Ronald, I'm going to say this nicely, you can shut up right now, enjoy the rest of the ride here, or there will be trouble," replied Harry.

"No, you can't hurt anyone, you're Harry Potter, you vanquished You-Know-Who, you're supposed to be good," said Ron in a confident voice.

“Good and evil are such subjective terms, but I suppose they’re about up to the speed for someone simplistic enough to believe the words of a manipulator who disregards the last wishes of a child’s parents and condones child abuse,” answered Harry and Ron’s mouth opened and shut a few times, as he seemed to be too shocked to speak. “In fact, I will have you removed right now. Oh Dobby!”

With a pop, a house elf dressed in a pinstripe suit appeared.

“Harry Potter sir was calling for Dobby?” asked the house elf.

“Yes, Dobby, could you please do something about this unwanted addition to this compartment?” asked Harry politely.

“Sir, wants Dobby to screw him?” inquired Dobby and Hermione lost all composure, breaking out into loud giggles and even Harry struggled to remain a straight face, as Ron looked absolutely horrified that a house elf would want to do unnatural things to him.

“Uh, Dobby, that’s put the screws to him,” said Harry as he looked to Ron. “But yes.”

“Right, Dobby does apologize, he still hasn’t quite gotten the hang of the lingo, Harry Potter, sir,” replied Dobby as he snapped his fingers which swung the door open before he lifted Ron up and forcefully removed Ron from the compartment.

“So, Harry, when were you going to tell me that you had a house elf?” asked Hermione.

“Actually when you started ranting about how house elves got an unfair deal again, it might have caused it to slip my mind when I did it a few months ago, but that can’t be it, can it?” asked Harry innocently. “Still, Dobby will tell you that I had to twist his arm for him to be paid ten galleons a month and have four weeks of all expenses paid vacation for the year, along with wearing clothes.”

“Tis true, Harry Potter sir was too kind to Dobby, Dobby protested, but Harry Potter told Dobby that he would increase Dobby’s pay if Dobby didn’t take his first offer right away,” replied the house elf as he walked back into the room, having disposed of Ron. “Sir is very

firm but Dobby supposes he is more than fair. Now, Dobby best be going now sir, just call if you needs anything.”

“Yes, that’s alright but Harry, I’ve been reading about house elves and it’s basically slave labor,” said Hermione. “It’s just like the thing with wands, house elves are conditioned to believe that they need to serve humans.”

“Hermione, I tell you this right now, to reeducate the house elves, we’re going to have to education the magical world and I don’t think that could be done without copious use of shock collars,” remarked Harry and Hermione opened her mouth. “Hermione, as tempting as it sounds, I am not going to buy shock collars and fix them to every single witch and wizard in Britain.”

Hermione saw the logic in Harry’s agreements and felt it would do no one any good to press on further. Some time later, the doors opened up and two red haired teenagers made their way inside. Harry smirked in spite himself.

“Is it true?” asked one of the twins.

“That our brother attempted to make friends with Harry Potter,” continued the second twin.

“Or knowing ickle Ronniekins, tried to suck up to young Mr. Potter, who was smart enough to see through it,” added the first twin again.

“Then was attacked by a house elf,” concluded the second twin again as they looked at Harry and Hermione.

“Yes, that’s true but wait a minute?” asked Harry. “No, it can’t be, they’re here Hermione!”

Hermione’s eyes widened in mock horror.

“Oh my, it’s really them, the Weasley Twins!” cried Hermione in a faux hysterical tone.

“We know all about you and your deviant ways,” added Harry.

"Is it true you can turn first years into carmel by merely looking at them?" asked Hermione.

"True, of course it's true, they're the second greatest group pranksters to ever come out of Hogwarts," said Harry. "Soon to be relegated to third place, of course."

"Yes naturally, mere amateurs, if Hogwarts could fall apart with them..." stated Hermione before she trailed off, with a smirk.

"Imagine the terror we can inspire in the hearts of the teachers," replied Harry. "Still, Weasley twins we salute you, as an inspiration to debauchery everywhere."

"Fred, have they been teaching a class in completing each others sentences?" asked George in an undertone. "I thought we were the only one's who could do that."

"I don't know, this could be a secret project by the teachers of Hogwarts to knock us down a few pegs," replied Fred.

"Still what do you mean by second greatest group of pranksters ever?" challenged George. "It almost sounds like you know about our heroes...our inspiration...but...how?"

"What makes you think that you can bump us down to third?" quested Fred.

"The fact that while you were talking we transfigured your robes to look like school girl uniforms might have something to do with it," replied Hermione and Fred and George looked down, but their robes remained unchanged.

"What are you talking about, our robes are fine?" inquired George.

"Here lies the genius of the prank, boys," replied Harry. "Hermione made you think we did something to your robes, so it worked. Good work, Hermione."

"Thanks Harry," said Hermione.

Fred and George exchanged looks, before they broke out into laughter.

"You know they got us good, Fred," said George.

"That they did George," added Fred.

"And answer your question about how I know about the Marauders, well to put it frankly, Prongs is my dad, otherwise known as James Potter," replied Harry calmly and the twins stood in shock before they got down on their knees and bowed towards the ground.

"We worship you," said George. "And not because you beat You-Know-Who either."

"But because you are the heir of one of the greatest pranksters that ever walked the halls of Hogwarts," added Fred.

"Then, I believe you have a certain map," answered Harry and the twins nodded. "Tell you what, I'll pay a handsome sum of money for the map."

"Exactly how much money are you talking about Harry?" asked George.

"Five hundred galleons," replied Harry and Hermione's eyes averted to Harry, wondering if her best friend had lost what was left of his sanity.

"Don't you mean five galleons Harry?" questioned Fred.

"No five hundred galleons," said Harry.

"Harry, that map's great and all but that map's not worth five hundred galleons," protested George.

"Good point, better make it seven hundred and fifty galleons," amended Harry and the twins stood their slack jawed. "If that's not enough for you, I can easily raise it to a thousand galleons..."

"No seven hundred and fifty would be fine, but Harry we would have given it to you for free it is yours after all," protested George.

"I don't do free, do whatever you want with the money when you have it, if you want to donate it to somewhere, other than back into my own bank account," said Harry. "I don't know, buy a gift from your parents, save to open up your own business, perhaps a joke shop, I don't really care once the money leaves my vault. So take the money or I'll sick my house elf on you."

"By the way Ron was talking that house elf was scary," muttered George

"Yes, it was, perhaps it isn't a good idea to argue," replied Fred.

"So Harry, we reluctantly accept your offer," said George in a resigned voice.

"We're slip you the map first thing in the morning," added Fred.

"Excellent and I'll get in touch with Gringotts to set up a vault for you two," concluded Harry as Fred and George quickly departed, before Harry could suggest an even higher price for the map.

"Harry, are you completely insane?" hissed Hermione.

"Yes, absolutely, why?" asked Harry.

"They would have given you the map for free, why would you pay seven hundred and fifty galleons for it?" wondered Hermione.

"It's an indirect way to get them on the path to getting on their mother's nerves once again," remarked Harry. "Not that they need much encouragement..."

"No they don't," agreed Hermione and the door opened for the third time, allowing Blaise to walk inside.

"There you two are, I thought I might find you back here, I would have joined you sooner," remarked Blaise.

“Good afternoon Blaise,” said Hermione calmly, as she submerged herself back into her book.

“Hello Blaise, what kept you?” asked Harry.

“Well, for one thing I nearly missed the train, because Dad checked his car three times for car bombs, he doesn’t take the Floo anymore when your guardian managed to reek havoc with it,” explained Blaise as she sat down right across from Harry. “Not to mention I was held up by Pansy Parkinson and her gaggle of idiots, they make pond scum look good but they kept trying to beg me to sit with them.”

“Maybe they thought they’d look better by comparison if you sat with them,” offered Harry.

“Could be but you’ve never met Pansy Parkinson, she always talks nice to you to your face but then spreads rumors about you behind your back,” said Blaise. “Could care less, I would never be friends with someone like head but any idea where you’re going to be sorted, Harry, Hermione?”

“Ravenclaw,” replied Hermione without missing a beat as she turned the page. “I wouldn’t be caught dead in Gryffindor after what I’ve found out about them recently, Slytherin wouldn’t accept my type, but I suppose Hufflepuff wouldn’t be too bad.”

“Are you kidding, Hufflepuff is the joke of all of Hogwarts?” drawled a very familiar voice that caused Harry to clench his fists, as Draco Malfoy stood at the doorway.

“Malfoy,” replied Blaise, as if the name soiled her tongue just by speaking it.

“Zabini,” answered Malfoy who seemed cocky and self assured as ever, it seemed the damage was already done before Lucius was sent off to Azkaban. “So, did your mother kill any husbands lately?”

“I wouldn’t be one to talk Malfoy, your father is probably dropping the soap at Azkaban as we speak,” replied Blaise coolly and Harry and Hermione both snickered, but Malfoy seemed confused, only barely

realizing that Blaise had somehow disrespected his father and he turned to Hermione.

"I'm sorry, I don't know who you are?" said Malfoy rudely.

"Not that it's any of your business but my name's Hermione Granger," said Hermione.

"Granger's not a wizard family name so you must be a Mudblood," replied Draco snidely and Harry's eye twitched, the urge to throw Draco into a cage with a hungry Fenrir Greyback on a full moon was very appealing, he was asking for it all the last timeline and during their second face to face encounter in this one, he was asking for it again. "Potter, I know we didn't get off on the right foot the last time we met, but hanging out with a Mudblood and a daughter of a murderer is not good for someone like you. I..."

"Can help me see who is right or wrong, right, Draco," cut in Harry and Malfoy nodded. "No, Malfoy, I don't think so, I know who my friends are and just a friendly warning, if you continue this attitude problem of yours, you'll end up like your father."

"Fine Potter, you've made an enemy," retorted Malfoy frostily.

"Yeah, like Harry's really scared of a little twerp like you," said Blaise sarcastically.

"No one asked you, Zabini!" snapped Malfoy as he walked off in a huff on his own accord which disappointed Harry, as he wanted to call back Dobby, so he can humble the younger Malfoy heir."

"You never really told me what house you wanted to be in Harry?" prompted Blaise as if Malfoy hadn't even been there, because it was best if Blaise pretended people like Draco Malfoy didn't exist. It was much easier to remain sane that way.

"Oh, it doesn't matter, anything but Gryffindor," replied Harry. "I'd like house mates that can think for themselves, but where do you think you'll end up Blaise?"

“Oh, both sides of my family have been in Slytherin for a long time, but Ravenclaw isn’t out of the realm of possibility I suppose,” replied Blaise. “Couldn’t see myself as a Hufflepuff really and I’m not reckless enough to be in Gryffindor.”

The rest of the train ride went by without any incident and they were taken up to the school by the customary boat journey. Harry thought about the upkeep of his organization but Dobby promised to bring Harry daily updates and keep him up to date on anything that he needed to know. Plus, once he got the map, Harry would have been able to sneak out a couple times a week to check up on important matters and maybe crack some skulls of those who might try to stiff him.

Harry, Blaise, Hermione, and the rest of the first years listened to Professor McGonagall give her speech about the Hogwarts houses. Nothing changed much with McGonagall, no matter how much Harry contorted the time line, she still could silence a crowd of children with a mere stern glare. Still, she was perhaps one of the fairest teachers that had taught at Hogwarts never playing favorites.

Harry missed the sorting hat’s song as he was distracted by Malfoy’s snide remarks over to the left, about how Mudbloods and blood traitors should be tossed out of Hogwarts, obviously looking towards Harry, Hermione, and Blaise as he was making these comments.

“Hermione, you’re going to go before Malfoy,” muttered Harry and Hermione nodded as she watched the sorting. “I need you to do me a favor, Malfoy needs to be taught a lesson of humility.”

“What?” questioned Hermione and Harry whispered in Hermione’s ear. “Are you sure I can get the hat to go for it?”

“Play on the hat’s desire to inspire house unity,” replied Harry.

“You two are up to no good, aren’t you?” whispered Blaise.

“Us?” asked Harry innocently and Hermione looked up with a falsely sweet smile. “Blaise, I’m hurt, I would never do anything cruel and underhanded.”

“Right,” said Blaise dryly. “I’m sure it will be good whatever you’re do.”

Hermione heard her name called and she made her way up to the stool, before she sat down and placed the hat on her head.

“An interesting mind,” said the hat. “Very perceptive, a nearly Slytherin thirst for knowledge, and not a bad deal of cunning but also loyalty to your best friend, a Hufflepuff quality. Yet, you are very brave as well but...but Gryffindor would not do, you wouldn’t be at home there or all. A very tough decision and to answer your thoughts, yes, it may be a good idea if that particular child might be taught a lesson in humility. Still, Miss Granger you will do the best in....RAVENCLAW!”

Hermione made her way over to the Ravenclaw table, with more students being sorted until it was Draco Malfoy’s turn. Malfoy strutted up to the Sorting Hat before he placed it on his head.

“Just put me in Slytherin, my entire family has been in there,” demanded Malfoy to the hat pompously.

“Yes, a tiny bit of cunning is there, not much, but a decent amount,” agreed that hat. “But I do see something else, a loyalty to uphold the Malfoy family name, despite the crimes of your family. I haven’t seen such a loyalty far, so I believe there would be only one place to put you, Draco Malfoy...”

“Slytherin you stupid piece of fabric, Slytherin, don’t you dare put me in....” demanded Malfoy.

“HUFFLEPUFF!” shouted the hat and Draco got up, looking absolutely horrified.

“No, I demand a resort!” shouted Malfoy angrily stamping his feet like a three year old. “This is utter rubbish, a member of the Malfoy family being thrown into the misfit house of Hogwarts, I should be a Slytherin...”

“Draco, go to your house table and stop making a fool out of yourself!” hissed Narcissa from the staff table and Draco made his

way to the table, but he shot the hat a dirty glare as Blaise was laughing so hard that tears were rolling down her cheeks and Harry snickered as well.

Some time later, Harry's name was called.

"See you in Gryffindor, mate!" called Ron with a confident smile and Harry wondered if Dobby had hit Ron too hard in the head earlier to make him forget what Harry had said on the train or he was just obsessed with becoming Harry Potter's best friend.

An idea came to Harry's head as he sat down on the stool, he would teach Ronald Weasley the same lessons of humility. With a smirk, Harry placed the hat over his head.

"Hmm, I'm getting an interesting sense of deja-vu here," thought the hat. "Ah, this does make sense, time travel, of course. Last time I put you in Gryffindor, which appeared to be a good fit for five years but your mind seemed to be geared to something a bit more cerebral so my alternate self was right, you would have done well in Slytherin."

"Well then by all means, put me there but while you're at it..." started Harry.

"No, as much as Slytherin would be an ideal fit, I'm concerned what you might do to them if left unattended, I see vague ideas of vengeance floating in your mind for half of the house," said the hat. "Still....I do see merit with your idea, I do wish I had the pleasure of talking to yourself and Miss Granger sooner, perhaps the state of house unity would not be as depressing as it is now. In the end, I can dig deep enough in a student's mind to find a logical reason to place them in any house, no matter how subconscious. Still, there is no doubt in my mind that you belong in....RAVENCLAW!"

Harry moved his way over to the Ravenclaw table, sitting right beside Hermione.

"I figure you'd be in Ravenclaw Harry," said Hermione. "Anyone who knows you beyond reading beyond your exploits in books would have known as well."

“Sirius and Remus both figured that I’d be a Ravenclaw as well, so you might be onto something” answered Harry.

“Speaking if Sirius and Remus, what are they doing at the staff table?” wondered Hermione and Harry’s eyes snapped up, sure enough there was Sirius and Remus sitting at the end of the staff table.

“I have a theory but Ron’s being sorted,” said Harry quickly and Hermione raised her eyebrow at Harry’s sudden interest. “This is going to be good.”

Hermione remained quiet, as Ron placed the sorting at on his head, with Blaise being the only other person left to be sorted.

“Hmm, another Weasley, trademark bravery, not as much as your brothers, but it is still there,” thought the hat. “But what’s this, I see it deep inside your mind, Ronald Weasley. I see a great ambition, a great desire to move high above your brothers. Therefore, I only have one choice and that’s to put you in....SLYTHERIN!”

Ron’s eyes widened and his jaw dropped as he realized what had just happened. This wasn’t right, he was supposed to be a Gryffindor like the rest of his family and he took the hat off of his head, before he dropped it and made his way over to the Slytherin table, his legs feeling like concrete as he sat down.

“Way to go Weasley!” shouted one of the older Slytherins as he thumped Ron on the back.

“Yes, good job rising above the standards of your filthy family and making something out of yourself!” added another Slytherin as Ron looked horrified at all of these dark wizards and witches in the making treating him like they were one of his own.

“I’m not one of...” started Ron but he was drowned out by the congratulatory remarks of the Slytherin house.

Blaise made her way up to the stool and sat down, placing the hat on her head.

“Very interesting, not as ambitious as your mother was, which is naturally a good thing considering how she turned out,” remarked the hat. “Not a bad intellect, a very difficult place to put you.”

“Yeah just place me somewhere, some of these idiots are looking hungry,” thought Blaise as she observed several people move restlessly.

“Now, young lady, these things can’t be rushed,” admonished the hat. “Still even with your intellect, your ambition to prove that you are different from either one of your parents would cause you to fit in well in....SLYTHERIN!”

Blaise could live with that, Slytherins got along well enough with Ravenclaws, it was Hufflepuffs and Gryffindors that they couldn’t stand at all. As soon as she took her seat, a large feast had appeared.

Once dinner and dessert had been consumed, Nicholas Flamel rose to his feet.

“Another year at Hogwarts, I hope your summers were productive, I can tell you that mine seemed to have gone by way too fast, but then again, when you’re my age, a decade seems like a split second,” announced Flamel, earning a few chuckles. “First and foremost, the Forbidden Forest should be avoided at all costs, I learned that the hard way and it wouldn’t serve any of you well to learn the same practical lesson that I did. Secondly, to avoid Mr. Filch from having yet another psychotic breakdown, no magic should be used in the corridors and there is a list of banned items on his door that you can see at your leisure. Thanks to the tireless effort of two students that should remain nameless, the list has tripled in length over the past year.”

Fred and George bowed their heads slightly.

“Finally, new staff this year,” said Flamel. “After completing his Hogwarts education, after some new evidence came to light that he was not the person responsible for the horrible events that lead to his expulsion during his third year, Rubeus Hagrid will be taking over the position of the Care of Magical Creatures class from whatever’s left of Professor Kettleburn.”

Harry nodded, under the guise of Barone, he had brought the diary to Flamel a couple of years ago and they had worked together to find a way to use it to clear Hagrid's name, before they managed to destroy it with a very nasty corrosive potion of Flamel's invention that was just about as potent as Basilisk venom.

"The next new staff position is that of the Defense Against the Dark Arts position, will be held by Remus Lupin," continued Flamel. "He will not be the only man who will be holding this position, as there will be times where Professor Lupin will be unavailable, so Professor Sirius Black has agreed to teach whatever classes Professor Lupin will be unavailable in addition to his duties in assisting with the security of the castle."

Several people whispered about Sirius, obviously it was much more interesting to pretend that he was still an infamous mass murderer than remember that he had been cleared of all charges.

"Classes begin tomorrow but bed tonight," replied Professor Flamel as the prefects lead the new students towards their respective common rooms.

Narcissa made her way to the staff room sometime later, and she was taken aback to see Sirius was sitting there.

"Sirius," said Narcissa calmly.

"Narcissa," replied Sirius in equally forced calmness as he looked upon his cousin. "Long time, no see."

"I don't think we've had a proper conversation since before I married Lucius," remarked Narcissa. "A mistake on my part, but I was blinded by my love towards Lucius and what I thought was ideal pureblood ideals."

"Yes, a mistake, but at least you realized it was one once old Lucy landed himself in Azkaban and you got the marriage annulled," replied Sirius. "I hear you're new teaching career is taken off, a surprising choice."

"Yes, it's a shock having to work for money for a change," admitted Narcissa, as her mind shifted towards Bella and her lingering mental issues, wondering if should asked Sirius for help. After all, he was the head of the house of Black, but Narcissa also knew that Sirius and Bellatrix absolutely despised each other. They made James Potter and Severus Snape look like good friends. Bellatrix would never accept Sirius's help and Sirius would have Bellatrix thrown into Azkaban. "So, what have you done with your life since getting cleared?"

"Oh, nothing much, a bit of freelance consulting work for a friend," answered Sirius. "Also, I've spent a bit of time trying to get Andromeda reinstated into the family but mother made the disownment airtight."

"Well, she did marry that muggleborn," offered Narcissa and Sirius just narrowed her eyes at her. "My aunt didn't want to chance the fact that Andromeda would be put back by a new head to disown the line but I suppose there might be a loop hole if you look hard enough."

Sirius blinked, wondering if his cousin was offering him some vague help but then again Harry had his lawyers go over the order of disownment from every angle and they hadn't found anything yet. His mother covered all angles, she was as cunning as she was nasty.

The staffroom door cracked open and Flamel walked in.

"Professors Black and Black, I thought you might be here, I just got some rather depressing news from the Ministry," stated Flamel. "The other teachers will be on the way, a full emergency meeting has been called, especially since at least three, come to think of it, four, may be in grave danger, not that innocents would be in any better shape. In any event, all the teachers must be made aware that the protections of Hogwarts need to be reinforced, as I wish not to put full faith into the school holding its own protections without added assistance."

"What's happened?" asked Narcissa diplomatically.

"Three prisoners have been broken out of Azkaban," explained Flamel gravely.

“Which three?” questioned Sirius.

“Severus Snape, Lucius Malfoy, and Adrianna Zabini,” informed Flamel.

Chapter Eighteen: Countdown.

Azkaban was said to be the ultimate inescapable magical fortress. As a result of this belief, the Ministry of Magic felt safe in keeping some of the most dangerous magical prisoners in all of Britain and perhaps the world, relying on the powers of Dementors to keep the guests of the prison at bay. The Ministry only checked up on the inmates occasionally, preferring just to keep them out of sight.

The small flaw in the Ministry system is perhaps the reason why they couldn't exactly detail exactly when Adrianna Zabini, Lucius Malfoy, and Severus Snape had escaped from Azkaban prison. It could have been anywhere from a couple of hours until the last time they checked the prison, nearly three weeks ago. The only information that they could manage to get from the Dementors, was that all indications were that someone broke the terrible triumvirate out of the prison. It was collective hope of those Aurors who were assigned to capture the escapees and whoever was responsible for breaking them out, that they didn't get far from the island. The second breakout in many years after the first breakout many years ago sprung Sirius Black, who was of course later proven innocent, and eight convicted Death Eaters, a group that included one Bellatrix Lestrage.

Severus Snape was not too happy about being sprung from Azkaban. While the Dementors were bothersome, Snape had seen far worse horrors attempting to decipher the drivel that his students passed off as essays. Besides, the food was not as bad as some had made it out to be. Personally, Snape felt he would have gone mad faster had he remained at Hogwarts.

Snape looked around, taking in the surroundings and most importantly looking for a way out when he had a wand. As far as he could tell, he and his fellow prisoners were inside a small cellar with no windows and one door at the top of a small stairway.

"Severus, I do find it astonishing that we were broken out now," remarked Lucius as he looked at his forearm absentmindedly. "My mark has been growing stronger so..."

"No, not in front of her," muttered Snape as he looked at Adrianna.

“Snape, please, you think I don’t know that you’ll talking about the Dark Lord,” interjected Adrianna in a bored tone. “I doubt very much it’s him anyway, he would have just sprung us and not bothered to knock us unconscious.”

“She does have a point Severus,” agreed Lucius. “So, if it’s not the Dark Lord, I do wonder who would have anything to gain from breaking us out.”

The door creaked open and a hooded figure made her way down the stairway. A stubby hand reached from underneath the sleeve of the robe and pulled out a wand, which caused the door to swing shut, sealing itself. The figure walked down the steps.

“Hem, hem,” declared the figure as the hood swung down revealing the face of Dolores Umbridge as she stared at the three fugitives with her toad face.

“What are you doing here, Umbridge?” demanded Adrianna with absolute contempt.

“Now Adrianna, no need to be crass,” replied Umbridge with a girlish giggle. “It was I who managed to get you out of Azkaban.”

“How?” inquired Snape.

“Well, I didn’t do it personally obviously,” explained Umbridge. “A few members of the Auror department owed me a favor, so they managed to sneak off to Azkaban and break you out of jail.”

“So, Umbridge, you obviously want something from us, because I doubt very much that you broke us out of Azkaban out of the kindness of your heart,” said Snape and Umbridge just smirked, before nodding in response.

“A filthy Mudblood needs to be put in his proper place,” responded Umbridge calmly. “He has wronged us all in some way.”

“Barone,” replied Adrianna icily. “He put us all in Azkaban.”

Lucius nodded, he knew that a six year old could not have outwitted him and when he heard about Barone from the Aurors, Malfoy came to one logical conclusion. Barone told the Boy-Who-Lived exactly what to do after the mobster managed to switch the documents without Lucius knowing it.

"That's all well and good Dolores," said Lucius. "Our imprisonment was a minor setback, but what has he done to you to incur your wrath?"

"Other than being a Mudblood with way too much power?" asked Umbridge and Lucius briefly nodded. "Two things, he caused the Ministry to lose control of the Daily Prophet, a scandal that reflected badly on me and secondly, he caused Cornelius to lose his chance to become Minister of Magic thanks to that little smear campaign. Since I was one of Fudge's strongest supporters, my reputation took a plunge and now I've been demoted down to the Department of Magical Maintenance."

"Yes, Umbridge, rather horrific, actually working for a living," responded Snape dryly.

"So, I wish to see Barone battered and broken, disgraced before the entire world," continued Umbridge, ignoring Snape's outburst. "You three were broken out of Azkaban to make sure Barone has a little accident that I can't be tied to in any way whatsoever."

"What's in it for us?" demanded Adrianna, who didn't do any charity work whatsoever.

"I will ensure that you will be able to leave the country with the Ministry believing you're dead," answered Umbridge.

"No," responded Snape calmly.

"I beg your pardon, Severus?" questioned Umbridge

"Send me back to Azkaban, I'd rather take my chances with the Dementors," answered Snape crudely.

“For once, I agree with Snape,” added Adrianna, who still looked rather bored. “I’ve only met Barone once face to face, but rest assure, I’ve heard things about him that proves that he is ruthless. If he wanted us dead, we would be dead and the only reason that we were sent to Azkaban is because Barone was in the right mood. When he’s caught in the wrong mood, it’s not exactly a pretty sight.”

“Some might say it’s your civic duty to help reel in a dangerous threat to the purity of magic,” said Umbridge shortly.

“Well, Umbridge, if you want to get shot at, then by all means, go and try to eliminate this dangerous threat to the purity of magic,” responded Snape. “The opportunity has not properly presented itself for proper revenge on Barone and perhaps Potter as well, if we act too soon, everything will be set back.”

“What will be set back?” demanded Umbridge but Snape remained still, with no emotion whatsoever on his face.

“Umbridge, you broke all three of us out of Azkaban, but only one of us will be of any use to you,” replied Snape calmly, blowing off Umbridge’s question completely. “Lucius didn’t get into a high ranking position with the Dark Lord because of his dueling abilities. His main attributes were his influence and his money, which he now lacks due to being a fugitive on the run and well as for her, a marriage followed by the subsequent mysterious accident and draining of her dead husband’s assets are about the only thing she’s good for.”

“Yes, Snape, getting knocked out by a six year old really showed how apt you are,” said Adrianna dryly.

“So Snape, you believe that you may be the only one of us that has a chance against Barone,” said Lucius.

“I never said that Lucius, but if you wish to believe that, then feel free,” retorted Snape. “Umbridge, I believe you will send me back to Azkaban. If these two want to go to their doom, then well, that’s a loss.”

“Severus let me make one thing perfectly clear, I’m not one of your Gryffindor first years,” whispered Umbridge in a nasty voice. “The fact

remains that none of you have any choice of the matter and will fight Barone.”

Umbridge looked nastily as the three fugitives looked back at her with contempt, each wishing they had a wand so they could make her pay.

“You will find that I have placed around your necks a magical collar, that causes a pain that is only slightly below that caused by the Cruciatus Curse,” said Umbridge in a sickly sweet voice that was likely to induce cavities for anyone who heard it. “Observe.”

Umbridge gave a small flick of her wand and seconds later, the three fugitives screamed in absolutely agony, as all the nerves in their body seemed to be getting assaulted simultaneously. The suffering lasted for about ten seconds, before Umbridge flicked her wand again and the magical collars quit doing their work.

“These were originally developed to keep werewolves in line, but some people in the Ministry thought it was unethical to use such means even against filthy half breeds,” scoffed Umbridge. “Therefore, they will serve nicely to make sure you three help me do what is necessary.”

Umbridge removed a box from underneath her robe before she opened it to reveal three wands.

“I would highly suggest not thinking about attacking me when you get your new wands,” warned Umbridge. “Those collars do have another setting that can be activated by a jab of my wand, which may also be activated should you attempt to make a run for it.”

Without another word, Umbridge passed the wand to the three fugitives. Snape in particular looked like he wanted to kill that vile woman if he could get away with it and the other two didn’t seem to care for Umbridge all that much at the moment.

“Now, I would suggest you three work together and figure out a way to track down Barone,” added Umbridge, who was well aware that the Ministry wasn’t too successful in their efforts to bring the mobster down. “I will be monitoring your progress, is that clear?”

The three fugitives nodded sullenly, which prompted Umbridge to respond with her most sickeningly sweet smile.

“Very well, off with you,” commanded Umbridge sweetly.

Outside of the Burrow, in the early part of the morning, just a bit past dawn, two ten year old girls were sitting on the grass.

“It’s just not fair, Ron gets to go to Hogwarts and see Harry Potter,” complained Ginny. “I have to wait a whole entire year.”

Luna just hummed under her breath, her friend’s infatuation with Harry Potter seemed to be a bit silly, considering she had never met Harry before.

“Seriously Luna, Harry Potter, I bet he’s so cute and the nicest boy in the world,” continued Ginny who had a dreamy look on her face. “Don’t you think Harry Potter’s just the best?”

“I wouldn’t know, because I’ve never met him before,” answered Luna calmly. “For all I know he could be a wicked little boy that tortures small animals.”

“Luna, you really shouldn’t be saying things like that, I mean he’s Harry Potter!” shouted Ginny stubbornly.

“He might be nice, I don’t know,” responded Luna. “If I meet him one day, I’ll judge him for myself and I think it might be a good idea for you to do so too. He might not be someone you get along with.”

“Luna, you’re my friend but you’re wrong,” replied Ginny stubbornly. “Harry and I will get along great, we’re be perfect together. Mummy said that when I grow up, I can marry him, wouldn’t that be nice?”

“If you say so Ginny,” responded Luna in a vague voice and Ginny decided to change the subject.

“So, how’s your Mum doing?” asked Ginny, referring to the accident that happened just months ago in this reality.

“Pretty good actually, she’s starting to regain the use of her limbs,” replied Luna in a happy voice. “She might get let out of St. Mungos in a few months; it depends on how well she’s doing. Daddy’s really happy; she seems to have learned her lesson about experimenting with unknown magic.”

A scream and a shattering of glass was heard from inside the Burrow.

“Mum’s upset,” muttered Ginny, who recognized the symptoms immediately.

“I better go, your Mum’s really scary when she’s mad,” said Luna in a serious voice and Ginny nodded, agreeing one hundred percent. “Bye Ginny.”

“Bye Luna,” responded Ginny before she turned her back to enter the house to see her mother seizing. “Mum what is it?”

“Your brother got himself sorted into Slytherin!” shouted Molly as she waved a letter in her hand, sent by Percy. “I thought, of all of them, Ron would have been the least likely to go in that house, but he’s going to be steered on the path of evil or killed. If Dumbledore was there this wouldn’t have happened, he would have made sure that Ron would have gotten in the proper house, how is he suppose to befriend Harry now?”

Ginny just half listened to her mother rant and a howler looked to be in Ron’s not so distant future.

After receiving the Marauder’s Map from Fred and George, Harry was met by Professor Flitwick who told him that Flamel wanted a word with him and Hermione up in his office before they were to begin their first class, which was Defense Against the Dark Arts.

The two Ravenclaw first years entered the Headmaster’s office, where Blaise and Malfoy were both waiting as well.

“What are you doing here, Potter?” demanded Malfoy.

“I could ask the same question to you, Malfoy,” replied Harry.

“Now, I’m sure we’ll find out in a minute,” said Hermione calmly.

“I don’t recall giving you permission to speak, Mudblood,” hissed Malfoy.

“Yes, Malfoy, that word loses meaning every time it passes off your tongue,” chimed in Blaise in a bored voice before Harry could remove Draco’s tongue with his bare hands. “Why don’t you find a new insult? I’ve only heard it about twelve times from you and that’s just today!”

Perhaps for the best, Flamel walked into view at that moment.

“Now, I’ve called you to this office on a rather grave manner,” stated Professor Flamel. “Three fugitives have been broken out of Azkaban, Lucius Malfoy, Severus Snape, and Adrianna Zabini.”

Blaise looked absolutely rattled at the news that her mother had been broken out of Azkaban. At the time, she didn’t fully grasp what her mother had attempted to do to her but now as she was older, Blaise understood enough to be absolutely disgusted with her mother.

“I highly doubt this has anything to do with me, Professor,” remarked Draco haughtily

“Malfoy, do you use that space between your ears for anything else other than collecting cobwebs?” asked Blaise. “Your father has been in Azkaban for a long time and he might be unhinged, plus with his beliefs, he might not take too kindly of you being sorted into Hufflepuff.”

“Miss Zabini does have an excellent point Mr. Malfoy and I doubt I have to explain to the rest of you why you may be in danger,” prompted Flamel and Harry, Hermione, and Blaise nodded. “Now, the school is being checked for security flaws and all teachers are to be made aware to look out for the strange. The Ministry of Magic may very well send a few Aurors to keep an eye on the area around Hogsmeade.”

Flamel paused, before he resumed his speech calmly.

“The most important thing is to be careful, now I’m not foolish enough to assume that you’ll be protected just because you’re inside the school walls but I would highly recommend not going out after hours,” continued Flamel. “If everything goes right, the Ministry will have these dangerous fugitives back in Azkaban where the Ministry feels they belong. I feel they belong in the ground personally, but unfortunately, I won’t be the one deciding their fates”

“Professor Flamel, I want to ask you a question about something you said,” prompted Hermione.

“Yes, Miss Granger, what is it?” responded Flamel.

“Well, you said that these three were broken out of Azkaban so...” stated Hermione before she trailed off.

“That means that someone wanted them out, which to me seems to be more troubling than the fact that they broke out on their own accord,” added Harry.

“Yes, I’m afraid you may be right, but the Ministry of Magic assures me that they are investigating all leads thoroughly,” responded Flamel and the look on his face showed Harry exactly how much faith Flamel had put into the assurances of the Ministry of Magic. While the new Minister seemed to be a bit better than Fudge or Scrimgeour ever were, there were others in the Ministry who had their own agenda and even the best Minister couldn’t magically make everyone else competent, even in a year.

Flamel paused.

“Now, you needed to know but do not let that trouble your schoolwork, as I said, all the precautions possible are being taken to ensure that the escapees will not make it past the Hogwarts gates,” concluded Flamel. “With any luck, this is the last you will need to hear of the matter, but if anything else pressing comes up, you’ll know.”

Blaise, Hermione, and Harry all nodded in agreement but Malfoy still looked like he couldn’t believe that he was in any danger.

“Very well then, off to class, wouldn’t want you all to miss too much,” continued Flamel as he waved them off and Malfoy quickly left the Headmaster’s office.

Blaise, Hermione, and Harry waited until Malfoy was a good distance away, before they separated, with Blaise heading to Transfiguration and Harry and Hermione making their way to join the rest of the Ravenclaws for the Defense of the Dark Arts.

“So, someone may have it out for me,” remarked Harry in a low voice as the two Ravenclaw first years made their way to class. “I have my ideas on who it might be, but I don’t know if I’m ready.”

“You don’t think its Voldemort, do you Harry?” asked Hermione in a worried voice.

“I hope not, but we can’t rule him out,” replied Harry. “Just the fact that those three were broken out at the same time raises some very interesting questions and you know how much faith I have in the Ministry”

“But there is a chance they will be caught before you have to deal with them,” argued Hermione.

“Anyone else but me, yes there might be,” said Harry. “However, as you know, I have the worst possible luck in the world.”

“Professor Flamel said that everything was being done to keep those three out,” replied Hermione.

“Yes, but he also just about as much said that no defense is foolproof and I agree with him,” said Harry as they reached the Defense against the Dark Arts classroom before they made their way inside, where Remus appeared to have been just entering the classroom as all the Ravenclaw first years were seated.

Remus spent a couple of minutes taking roll, before he turned to the class.

“Welcome to Defense Against the Dark Arts class,” said Remus. “I am your teacher, Professor Lupin and I hope that throughout the next

seven years, you will get a through understanding of how to defend yourself against some of the most dangerous creatures and spells. Now, exactly what are the dark arts?"

Several people raised their hands but naturally, no one raised their hand higher than Hermione. Harry snickered, some things never changed.

"Hermione," called Professor Lupin.

"The dark arts are considered to be any spell that is used for malicious and permanent injury on another human being or any magical creature that is considered a deadly threat to a human being," replied Hermione in a confident voice.

"Very good take five points for Ravenclaw," responded Lupin and Terry Boot had his hand up. "Yes, Terry, would you like to add something?"

"Professor Lupin, the dark arts are also considered to be evil, aren't they?" responded Terry.

"Official Ministry edict says yes, but there is a few common misconceptions about the line between evil and dark," said Remus as he looked over at Harry. "Harry, you look like you know the reason why, so please tell us."

"There are times where the dark arts are used for very evil purposes," admitted Harry. "However, the criteria of what has been considered dark have been determined by strictly lack of knowledge. The Ministry of Magic may officially label a spell to be dark or at the very least questionable, because they lack the knowledge or power to counter the effects."

"Excellent Harry, that's true," responded Remus. "For example, the stunning spell and the coma curse has the same general idea, to knock an opponent unconscious. The stunning spell does have a counter spell while the coma curse is unable to be reversed. Not only that, but a powerful witch or wizard can cause permanent brain damage with such a curse, which falls under the general definition of the dark arts."

The rest of the class was a discussion of a general overview of the dark arts, along with what was to be covered in this class. Harry agreed with the opinion that justifying the use of the dark arts was a sketchy area at best, in the past timeline he had learned them but had only used them when he was up against uneven odds as a bit of an equalizer against his opponents. Other than that, Harry was secure enough with his abilities not to use them as a crutch, but the knowledge did come in handy when figuring out a way to counter his deadly adversaries in any event.

Still the lesson was useful, if a bit of a rehash of most of what Harry had already knew but Remus managed to go over a large amount of material before the bell rang to end the class.

Boss Zabini looked at his crack council of mafia advisors for their quarterly meeting.

“Okay, as you mugs might have realized, last quarter we didn’t do so good, like every other quarter since they wise guy Barone took Boss Evans’s old organization by the throat and revolutionized the criminal underworld!” barked Zabini. “So any of you have any suggestions about how we reverse this downward trend. We need a gimmick to drum up some money to fund our operations, other than the passé drug, prostitution, and protection racket ideas that have been making us look like a group of two bit hoods against Barone.”

“How’s abouts we start up a phony religion,” suggested one of the mobsters. “We can sucker some people into donating money to save themselves from the inevitable armageddon, that our messiah is better than anyone else’s”

“No, religion ain’t going to cut it, that racket’s too seedy even for the mob,” responded Zabini seriously.

“Telemarketing scheme?” suggested one of the mobsters.

“Time shares?” inputted another mobster.

“Fake an alien invasion and then sell weapons to the public to defend themselves?” suggested a third mobster.

“No, those ideas require resources that we can’t afford to spread out right now,” said Zabini sighing as his advisors appeared to have either no ideas or completely idiotic ideas. “Just go with the protection racket scheme, again.”

A tapping outside the window signaled that Zabini had an owl.

“Check it for listening devices or bombs or anything else that can screw me over!” barked Zabini to his advisors as they let the owl inside, before they frisked the animal.

“It’s clean, Boss Zabini,” confirmed one of the mobsters as before handing the note to Zabini who read it, his face becoming more grave with each passing second as he read it.

“What kind of idiot what break her out of Azkaban?” demanded Zabini as his men cringed, the tone where Zabini uttered “her” made it painfully obvious who he was referring to.

“Now, Boss Zabini calm...” cautioned one of his men but this suggestion didn’t calm Zabini, but rather he pulled out his wand and pointed it out, with his fellow mobsters stepping back fearfully but he blasted the window, causing it to shatter and sending glass flying everywhere.

“I will not calm down, with Adrianna out of Azkaban, she’s likely to kill me and no doubt whoever broke her out has it in for me as well!” exclaimed Zabini in his most paranoid voice.

“Exactly who would have it in for you?” asked one of the mobsters. “Barone?”

“No, he has no reason to let out my wife, she’d want to kill him for foiling her sinister plot to change my daughter’s gender!” yelled Zabini dramatically. “It has to be someone, most likely in the Ministry, I have stepped on a lot of important toes.”

The group of advisors looked around, awaiting Zabini’s next order.

“Well don’t just stand there, make sure this building is secure, bring me some strong arms to send to Hogsmeade so I can keep an eye

on my daughter, and someone fix this window!" ordered Zabini as he sank down with his advisors moving to follow his orders, it was so hard to find good help these days.

At breakfast before the second day of lessons, Harry spotted a familiar owl jerkily flying towards the Slytherin table, a red envelope clasped in its talons.

"Hermione, put these on," muttered Harry as he passed Hermione a pair of earmuffs, before he took one out. "They are my super secret sophisticated weapon to combat the shrill tones of Molly Weasley."

"Secret weapon?" asked Hermione in bemusement.

"Yes they might look like a pair of ordinary earmuffs and that's because they are, specially charmed to block out howlers, all yours for three, count them three easy payments of four galleons, sixteen sickles, and twenty eight knuts," said Harry in a really bad impression of an infomercial announcer, as he put his ear muffs on with a few of his fellow house mates looking at him like he was insane, a belief Harry was hoping to confirm sooner rather than later. "Seriously, Hermione you better put them on, if you want to hear into old age."

Hermione did as she was told and not a second too soon as the howler was heard by everyone in the Great Hall.

RONALD BILLIUS WEASLEY, HOW DARE YOU GET YOURSELF SORTED INTO SLYTHERIN! HONESTLY, I RAISED YOU BETTER! THAT HOUSE IS NOTHING BUT TROUBLE! YOU BETTER MARCH RIGHT DOWN TO THE HEADMASTER'S OFFICE AND DEMAND A RESORTING NOW YOUNG MAN, OR YOU WILL BE DOING NOTHING BUT CHORES AND HOMEWORK ALL SUMMER, NO QUIDDITCH OR CHESS! PERCY, YOU ARE TO KEEP AN EYE ON RONALD TO MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T GO DOWN THE WRONG PATH!

The howler burst into flames and vanished with Ron looked very put out at the howler.

"Ah, Weasley, what does your cow of a mother know anyway?" remarked one of the Slytherins. "I guess she can't take the fact that

one of her five hundred children decided to do something better with themselves.”

“My mother is...” started Ron.

“Yes, don’t trouble yourself about what she says, there had to have been a reason you were sorted into Slytherin,” replied a second Slytherin. “Your mother obviously doesn’t know anything, starting with birth control.”

At the teacher table, several of the teachers grimaced, despite the fact that had heard the infamous Molly Weasley howlers several times due to the tendency of the Weasley Twins to get into trouble on an almost hourly basis, it still was an experience that they would not care to relive ever.

“My that was an experience,” muttered Remus shaking his head.

“WHAT?” shouted Sirius. “SPEAK LOUDER, I CAN’T HEAR YOU BECAUSE I’VE GONE TEMPORARILY DEAF THANKS TO THAT BANSHEE!”

“I said that was quite an experience!” repeated Remus before he looked over to the Ravenclaw table. “It seems like Hermione and Harry had the right idea.”

“Still can’t hear you, but at least it looks like Hermione and Harry had the right idea,” said Sirius, causing Remus to sigh in frustration. “Wouldn’t mind getting a pair of those, just in case she sends another howler.”

“Sirius, they’re just ordinary earmuffs,” said Remus shaking his head.

“What?” demanded Sirius.

Harry and Hermione left to make their way to their first class but footsteps indicated that Ron was following him.

“Harry, mate, you’ve got to help me,” begged Ron.

Harry sighed, Ron just didn’t get the hint ever.

"I don't know if we should be talking to you," said Hermione in a serious voice. "I mean, you are a Slytherin and you pretty much said all Slytherins go evil."

"Yeah Ronald, I know what you're up to, your trying to corrupt us with your evil and vile, insidious ways," added Harry.

"I didn't mean me, I meant everyone else!" cried Ron in a hysterical voice. "My Mum's going to kill me..."

"Well, you're stuck, as resortings aren't allowed at Hogwarts," replied Hermione.

"What?" shouted Ron in a horrified voice.

"Read Hogwarts: A History, it's in there, you know," said Harry smugly and Ron looked absolutely horrified at the thought of having to read a book.

"I'll just ask Professor Flamel," said Ron quietly.

"Yeah, you do that," said Harry. "Now, if you excuse us, we have to go to the library."

"The library!" exclaimed Ron in shocked voice. "There is only ten minutes before the first class..."

"There's isn't any concept of not enough time to go to the library when you're in Ravenclaw, Ronald," responded Harry.

"Mental," retorted Ron shaking his head. "And I'd really prefer if you called me Ron, mate."

"Whatever you say, Ronald," said Harry calmly before he turned his back with Hermione and walked off, Ron not wanting to follow.

A short time later, Blaise had joined them until they had to separate to go to their respective classes.

"Good morning Blaise," said Harry and Hermione nodded cordially.

“Don’t mind me, I’m just here to corrupt you with my evil, vile, and insidious ways,” replied Blaise with a smirk. “Seriously, Weasley is going to end up saying something that’s going to get him hexed by half of the house, sooner rather than later.”

“Good, then maybe it will teach him not to be so stereotypical,” replied Hermione stiffly.

“Well, I might as well baby sit him, to see that he doesn’t get killed before he learns his lesson,” said Blaise calmly. “Plus, all things considered, he may be one of the smarter students in this year, as depressing as that sounds and keeping an eye on him sure beats having to spend time in an enclosed room with Parkinson.. “

“Hey Harry,” said a voice and Harry turned slightly, to see Fred and George walking up, as they massaged your ears slightly.

“Hey, Fred, George,” greeted Harry.

“We were wondering how you didn’t seem to have any reaction to our mother’s shrill tones,” said George.

“Yeah, we saw you give something to Hermione too but we really couldn’t see it from we’re sitting and besides we were too busy looking at the look on Ron’s face when he saw he got a howler,” added Fred.

“Glad you asked, it was due to these,” replied Harry as he pulled out a pair of earmuffs. “First, exactly how many howlers do you receive a week from your mother?”

“At least two,” admitted George.

“Three or four, if we’re being really sloppy and get caught a lot,” added Fred.

“And that was just one howler and my ears are still ringing,” said Blaise. “After seven years, I’ll be deaf or at least hard of hearing.”

“But now, thanks to my super, secret sophisticated welcome to combat the shrill tones of howlers created by Molly Weasley, you will

be able to avoid a premature loss of your hearing,” announced Harry.
“For...”

Hermione clapped her hand over Harry’s mouth to interrupt his bad impression of an infomercial announcer.

“Please don’t do that again,” pleaded Hermione.

“Okay, I plan to mass market this revolutionary breakthrough to the public for three easy payments of four galleons, sixteen sickles, and twenty eight knuts,” said Harry with a completely serious expression etched on his face.

“We’ll take three, each,” said George as his twin nodded in agreement beside him.

Later that evening, Ron was about to leave dinner, when Percy stepped in front of him.

“Ronald, have you been up to the Headmaster’s office to suggest that you should get yourself resorted?” demanded Percy in his most pompous tone.

“Er, no, I was just about to...” stated Ron but Percy didn’t bother to allow him to finish.

“I’ll take you now Ronald, after all it is my duty as a prefect to ensure that students are fitting in correctly,” interrupted Percy as he grabbed Ron by the arm and pulled his younger brother towards Flamel’s office.

“No wonder Weasley got sorted into Slytherin, anyone would want to get away from him,” muttered one of the Slytherins.

Sometime later, Ron and Percy entered Flamel’s office, as he was sitting at his desk, looking at a magazine that he hastily put away when the two Weasleys entered the office.

“Ah Mr. Weasley and...another Mr. Weasley,” said Flamel as he surveyed them, pushing the magazine further out of sight. “What can I do for you two young men?”

“Professor Flamel, my brother Ronald believes, and I agree, that the Sorting Hat has been a grievous error and placed him in the wrong house,” said Percy.

“Arrogant child, the Sorting Hat never makes a mistake,” remarked the portrait of Phineas Nigellus Black. “It obviously saw something in him that caused him to be put into Slytherin that none of you arrogant minded fools saw.”

“As crude as our friend on the wall put it, he does have a point,” said Flamel. “Besides, resortings are not permitted, the founders laid down that law from the beginning, as stated in Hogwarts: A History.”

“Surely exceptions can be made,” pleaded Percy.

“No, I’m afraid not,” said Flamel in a final sort of voice. “Your brother must deal with the deck that the sorting hat dealt him for the next seven years, unless you can prove that the hat was somehow influenced into making a particular decision.”

“Influenced, I’m insulted,” said the hat from behind Flamel in an indignant tone. “Rest assure, while there was a part of Ronald Weasley that belonged in Gryffindor, there was an even bigger part of him that wanted to outshine his brothers that gave me little choice to place him into Slytherin. And who knows, perhaps this will be a sign of house unity, a Weasley in Slytherin.”

“Mother will be furious,” begged Percy.

“That’s her problem then, isn’t it,” sniped the hat. “Personally, I very nearly put her into Slytherin as well, she does have the ambition to run every single aspect of everyone else’s lives but I just barely put her in Gryffindor at the end.”

“Ronald this is all your fault, thinking those ambitious thoughts when you had the hat on,” hissed Percy.

“Oh yeah right, like it’s my fault you guys came along first and better!” snapped Ron. “Just leave me alone Percy, you’re just worrying about looking good in the eyes of the other prefects!”

“You’re disgracing the family name by being sorted in that house, if you listened to Mum, she said that house has turned out more dark witches and wizards than everyone else,” responded Percy.

“Enough, I’m disappointed with this lack of a show of house unity, stereotyping all the houses into one grouping” said Flamel calmly. “This is why I wanted to abolish the entire house system, but the board of governors shot me down. Still, I’m not Dumbledore and I won’t encourage this petty house rivalry between Gryffindor and Slytherin. Perhaps fifty points from Gryffindor would encourage you take a more open minded view?”

“Headmaster you...” stated Percy who looked horrified that Flamel took so many points.

“Are you disagreeing with me, Percy?” asked Flamel and Percy shook his head. “Good, I hope you learn your lesson, because I’d hate to see such an able prefect lose his badge and I will be writing to your mother about her misuse of howlers. Understand?”

“Yes Professor Flamel,” said Percy, hanging his head in shame, having been humbled by the centuries old wizard.

Classes were generally the same, if a bit better constructed to work together in conjunction with each other than during Dumbledore’s time. Even Harry found Potions to more bearable with Narcissa than it was with Snape, she was a perfectly acceptable teacher and didn’t play favorites despite the fact that Ravenclaws shared Potions with Hufflepuffs. The only one who seemed to be put out by this was Draco.

Still Harry sensed the Potions Mistress was a bit preoccupied with matters outside the school and for good reason, she didn’t paint Lucius in the best light when in the process of gaining the trust of the public to gain her position at Hogwarts and with Lucius at large, no doubt she feared repercussions from her former husband.

At the end of the week, Blaise, Harry, and Hermione made there way to the library, as it was a neutral place to quietly do their homework.

Needless to say that they weren't the only one there as Neville Longbottom was sitting with a Transfiguration textbook, looking extremely frustrated. Harry hadn't had a chance to talk with Neville, who turned out to be a fairly good friend in the old timeline whose life was unfortunately cut short by Death Eaters so Harry stepped over, seeing that Neville obviously had been given the assignment by McGonagall to turn a matchstick into a needle.

"Need any help?" asked Harry.

"No, I think I almost got it..." muttered Neville, who looked embarrassed at the fact that he was asked for need help.

"Ah, the matchstick into the needle, well there is a very simple way to do that you see," responded Harry as he sat down in front of Neville with Hermione and Blaise sitting on either side.

"Really, I mean that does seem to be nothing but a lot of theory, lot to remember," said Neville. "First time I tried it, I set the desk on fire..."

"First thing you need to do is relax," replied Harry. "It's very hard to do the simplest of magic when you are bundle of nerves, you need to relax and have faith in yourself, along with your abilities. Block everything else out of your mind, visual the matchstick turning into the needle, believe that you can do it and then wave your wand."

Neville looked very skeptical that this could work, but he did as he was told, raising his wand and the matchstick he had borrowed to practice on had turned into a needle, nowhere nearly as good as the one Harry and Hermione had produced that had earned them ten points a piece for Ravenclaw, but perfectly acceptable work.

"I did it," whispered Neville in an excited voice.

"Naturally, the Ministry might have my wand for this, but nine tenths of all magic is confidence and while the theory is important, it isn't a good idea to dwell on it..." stated Harry, before deciding to ask Neville's name as a courtesy, even though he already knew it. "I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name."

"Oh sorry, Neville Longbottom," replied Neville.

"Please to meet you Neville," interjected Blaise. "I'm Blaise Zabini."

"Also pleased, I'm Hermione Granger," said Hermione.

"Wait a minute, if you're Hermione Granger that means..." stated Neville.

"Ah yes, I'm Harry Potter, you may know me from the defeat of Lord Voldemort," responded Harry which caused Neville to laugh, after doing the mandatory flinch of Voldemort's name.

"Pleased to met you Harry, you didn't have to take time to help me but you did," said Neville grateful.

"Yes, happy to help, I figure you wanted to live up to the reputations of your parents," said Harry.

"How do you know?" asked Neville in surprise.

"Neville, it's natural, your parents were great, and maybe one day, but you need to work on forging your own destiny," said Harry. "My parents were too as well from what I heard, but at least you don't have to live up to a lightning bolt scar."

"When you put it that way Harry, I guess it's not that bad," replied Neville. "It's just that my grandmother is talking about how I should do more to live up to my parents, my father especially and I think they were glad, they thought I was a squib for years."

"I'm sure they overreacted," responded Hermione. "We're about to wrap up some homework, if you'd like to join us and we can help you through it?"

Neville seemed conflicted, but nodded, as Harry had already helped him through one difficult piece of magic, so it looked to be an opportunity that he couldn't pass up.

The next couple of months moved by at a rather brisk pace, with Harry's favorite class being Defense Against the Dark Arts, but perhaps he might have been just a tad bit biased. Both Sirius and Remus were knowledgeable on the subject, with Remus perhaps

being the better conventional teacher but Sirius also imparted his fair share of knowledge on the class. Harry did give them one piece of advice that thankfully they followed. That advice being for Remus to take off random days on occasion that didn't fall on the full moon, as they last thing they needed for anyone who had access to a calendar to figure out that Remus was a werewolf.

Other than the general stupidity with Ron and Draco, it was a pretty quiet school year and before anyone could know it, the Christmas holidays had arrived. When Sirius had mentioned that he was leaving for a couple of days to visit his cousin Andromeda and her family, Harry and Hermione had jumped on the chance to join him, mostly to get out of the house. Plus, Harry thought it would be nice to see Tonks again, who was one of the few members of the Order in the first timeline that wasn't a mindless Dumbledrone, even though it was a shame that she didn't quit before Voldemort had eradicated the whole of the Order of the Phoenix.

"Sirius good to see you were able to stop by and visit," said Andromeda.

"Glad to be here, I've been going over the ancient family laws and I think I've found a loop hole or rather, Mr. Barone did, that would get you back into the family," responded Sirius.

"There will be plenty of time to tell me about that later," replied Andromeda, waving it off. "Come on in, Ted and Nymphadora are waiting."

Sirius nodded before he turned to Harry and Hermione.

"This is my godson Harry Potter and his best friend, Hermione Granger," added Sirius.

"Pleased to meet you both," responded Andromeda, nodding at Harry and Hermione, as they made their way inside to join the others.

Little did they know that three shadowed figures were watching their moves from the bushes, cloaked under a Disillusionment Charm and each saw Harry Potter as their chance to get to Barone. It was quite lucky they managed to spot the three in Hogsmeade before tracking

them here and their momentarily lapse of security would be what they needed to make their move and gain their freedom.

"Pleased to meet all three of you," said Ted.

"Nymphadora get down here, our guests are here!" called Andromeda up the stairs.

"In a minute," said Tonks from her room upstairs and before Andromeda could call up the stairs again, the eighteen year old girl made her way down the stairs and stopped. "Ah, Sirius, I didn't expect to come this early, must have been caught up in my assigned reading for the Auror Academy."

Tonks turned to Harry and Hermione.

"Hermione Granger," replied Hermione as she greeted Tonks.

"Harry Potter, yes that Harry Potter," said Harry as he greeted Tonks, as she was taken off guard by who she was speaking to. "So training to be an Auror, huh? How's that working out for you?"

"It's not as fun as you think, especially in the first year," responded Tonks. "We have to spend hours upon hours of studying Ministry regulations; I never knew the Ministry had so counterproductive laws."

"I had an idea," remarked Harry. "My guardian told me about some of them, like that one about how fifth generation and above purebloods can't be arrested without an approved warrant from the full Wizengamot court."

"Ah yes, the famous Mr. Barone," said Tonks. "Harry, he sure does have his share of fans in the Ministry, especially among the senior officials."

"Really, he does?" asked Harry.

"Yes, it seems they all would like to see Barone get a little kiss if you catch my drift or as Scrimgeour refers to him, 'that damn gangster'", added Tonks with a smirk and Andromeda looked at her daughter.

“What, Mum, I’m just telling you what my direct superior at the Ministry is telling me.”

“Now, this couldn’t have anything to do with the fact that Uncle Al wrong an article, criticizing the Ministry about spending too much time having their Aurors memorize procedures and not enough time teaching them to teach the people they are supposed to be serving,” said Harry.

“That and the fact they still haven’t figured out how Barone could go in and out of the Ministry at will, along with triggering the anti-Magic defenses and basically making the Ministry play by his rules,” added Tonks. “But, really, I think that he hasn’t done wrong, I mean he hasn’t destroyed anyone’s reputation. At least anyone who didn’t deserve it.”

“Dora, I think that the Ministry is just a bit apprehensive about a Muggleborn having that much control over them,” remarked Ted as he had joined the conversation. “It disrupts their perfection tradition but the only one’s who have suffered are a few corrupt politicians.”

“Yeah they got tossed into Azkaban for...breaking the law,” inputted Hermione dramatically. “Oh no, that blasted Barone, he’s really victimizing the Ministry, better stone him to death and then suck his soul out. If we don’t put down this vile fiend, it’s the end of the world!”

“You have issues you know,” teased Harry.

“Most of them come from hanging around with you, Harry,” retorted Hermione.

“So, I think we might be able to get you back into the family, if we can prove that my mother was not of sound mind when she disowned you,” concluded Sirius from the other end of the room.

“That shouldn’t be so much of a problem, should it?” prompted Andromeda.

“We have to prove my mother’s insanity to the Department of Heritage,” added Sirius.

“Okay, that may constitute as a problem,” amended Andromeda. “The fact that you’re only the head of the Black family on a technicality doesn’t really bode well.”

“Tell me about it, but I haven’t quite given up, even if the Ministry’s making me leap through hoops just to reverse a simple disownment by my trigger happy mother,” replied Sirius and all of the sudden, an annoying shrill siren echoed from outside the house. “What in the bloody hell is that?”

“Parameter defenses, someone unauthorized is outside,” replied Andromeda.

“Really, what person would want to want to come here?” asked Tonks before Harry just looked at her with a knowing look.

“Oh, I can think of at least three people,” responded Harry. “Come on Hermione, let’s leave so we can let the adults and Sirius handle this.”

Hermione looked surprised but followed Harry into the next room as Sirius looked at Harry with mock rage as he retreated.

“Such wonderful children getting out of the way of danger,” said Andromeda.

“Yeah, they have much more sense than Nymphadora did at that age,” added Ted.

“DAD!” shouted Tonks incredulously.

“Or much more sense than Sirius did...well at any age,” inputted Andromeda.

“Hey what is this, pick up Sirius day?” asked Sirius.

“Yes, haven’t you checked the calendar?” replied Tonks with a grin but the banter was interrupted when the front window cracked open.

“Damn, I really hoped that the Ministry would have gotten here before they managed to find a way in,” muttered Andromeda as Snape,

Adrianna, and Lucius made their way in, wands raised, stepping forward.

“Potter, where is Potter?” demanded Lucius.

“Sorry, you just missed him but if you come back later, like around the time where hell freezes over, we’ll let you have him,” replied Tonks, who very nearly paid for her tongue, as Snape blasted a lethal curse towards her that she had the sense to duck and the spell destroyed a large vase behind her as the three fugitives stepped forward.

“We need to get them now, I’ll take Snape,” muttered Sirius but before anything could happen, more footsteps were heard and the imposing form of one Boss Barone had stepped from the shadows, wand in one hand and gun in the other.

“Hello, children!” exclaimed Barone as he pointed both weapons at them. “Daddy’s home!”

“I thought you said he wasn’t supposed to be here,” hissed Adrianna to Snape, who had coordinated the entire effort.

“We didn’t see him come here, so how did he get it?” asked Lucius but at least they had the sense to put up the bullet blocking shields.

“It might be a good time for a retreat, the plan doesn’t account for him coming up against us this soon” responded Snape casually as they made their way to the door, after dropping the shield.

Snape and Adrianna escaped but Lucius couldn’t make it in time, as he found his legs snapped together and he fell to the ground.

The next thing he knew, Barone had stood over him, with a malicious look in his eyes as he kicked Lucius’s wand out of the way.

“You don’t have the guts to do anything to me Barone,” taunted Lucius.

“Oh I won’t be doing anything to you Lucius,” said Barone as he snapped his fingers and Dobby appeared to his side, dressed in a

suit, with the infamous Malfoy family pimp cane in his hands. "He will."

The next thing Lucius knew, he was suffering the indignity of being beaten by his former house elf with his old pimp cane, as Barone looked on in amusement.

"Now exactly who broke you out of Azkaban?" demanded Barone.

"I don't have to tell you anything, I need Potter, and then I'll make my son and wife pay, dishonoring the Malfoy family name," muttered Lucius.

"Dobby," prompted Barone and Dobby stood on Lucius's crotch eagerly, grinding both of his little feet into it with a burst of ruthless aggression, causing Lucius to shriek like a little girl as Dobby was punishing him and ensuring that Draco would never have a younger brother or sister.

"Fine Barone, get this damn thing off of me!" shrieked Lucius and Barone waved Dobby off, as Lucius rolled into a fetal ball, in a huge amount of pain. "It was..."

Unfortunately, Barone never heard who it was, as he heard the Ministry of Magic Aurors disappearing outside and he took it as his cue to leave, along with Dobby.

"Man someone did a number on this one," remarked one of the first Aurors on the scene as they looked at Malfoy. "Well I'll be, Lucius Malfoy."

In the next room, Hermione helped Harry through the window, as he returned for his little interrogation of Lucius in his other persona.

"I was so close in worming a confession out Lucius," said Harry in an agitated voice.

"I wish I could have seen it, Malfoy sounded like he was in pain," said Hermione.

"I can tell you that he got nothing that he didn't deserve," responded Harry before he held up his hand. "Sounds like they're taking Lucius in and they captured Adrianna as she attempted to flee as well."

"Snape's still at large then," prompted Hermione in a worried voice.

"Hermione, that's a good thing," said Harry. "Last time I met Snape, I wasn't physically ready to take him head on, this time, I stand a better chance to make him pay."

Hermione looked a bit unsure about Harry's confidence but she reasoned that her friend never was too overly confident about something unless he had a good reason.

Harry had spent the next several months awaiting for any word whatsoever ever that may have clued him in to Snape's presence. He had nearly lost hope but by May, Harry had the opportunity to seize the chance that he had been waiting for.

The last several months had been rather good for Harry, as his super secret weapons to block out the shrill, sonic, vibrations of Molly Weasley's voice, had made him slightly richer, a good eighty five percent of the students had one and most of the teachers had also purchased one, although they half heartedly claimed it was for "research purposes". The Daily Prophet continued to expose the wrong doings of a fair few corrupt Ministry officials. Harry had always thought that Rita was vicious with a pack of lies, but she was ten times more brutal with the absolute truth. Plus, Harry also had finally completed one of his first projects, several years behind schedule, but after running into some rather depressing snags, he was able to complete his super transmitter that could tap into the frequency of every radio and television station around the world, to broadcast undisputed proof that the Wizarding World existed for a period of twenty four hours, charmed against any magical interference. It was only to be used as a last result, if the Ministry had done something stupid beyond all belief that caused Harry and his friends to be put in jeopardy. Plus business was up, despite Harry being at Hogwarts for most of the year, only popping in on weekends.

Harry was walking through the hall with Neville, Blaise, and Hermione, with Fred and George joining them.

“Harry, I still say we should go with Marauders, the Next Generation,” inputted Fred.

“I agree, I mean we are following in their footsteps, aren’t we?” asked George.

“In a way yes, but I prefer not to bastardize the legacy of the greatest group of pranksters ever to grace the halls of Hogwarts,” added Harry. “If I want to bastardize anyone’s legacy, it will be my own.”

“So exactly what do you suggest we name ourselves now?” asked Blaise.

“A group of students who get together occasionally to pull pranks to keep the rest of the school on their toes and don’t need a name to refer to themselves, because it would seem like a cheap rip off of the Marauders,” said Harry in one breath.

“Harry, we like you but you suck at naming,” responded George seriously.

“Yeah, better stick to devising the pranks, because if you had invented the dung bomb, you would have named it the poo projectile or something to that nature,” added Fred.

“Actually, I think Harry was basically tell you two that we don’t need a name,” said Neville. “He just did it...”

“In a slightly sarcastic manner,” supplied Hermione helpfully. “And I quite agree.”

“You would,” said Fred with a wink.

“And what’s that supposed to mean?” demanded Hermione.

“Nothing, nothing,” answered Fred, backpedaling quickly.

“Now children behave, don’t make me get the switch,” reprimanded Blaise.

A soft pop echoed and Dobby appeared with an frantic look on his face.

“Harry Potter sir, Dobby has heard tale that Snivellus Snapey is being in Hogsmeade,” replied Dobby. “Sir has been telling Dobby that he wants to know but would sir like Dobby to help knock up Snivellus Snapey!”

Harry stepped back, looking revolted at the mental image that Dobby had given him by misspeaking common mafia terms once again.

“No Dobby, I’d like to handle him and I think you should know that it’s knock off, not knock up,” corrected Harry.

“No amount of firewhiskey can erase that particular image from the inside of my brain,” muttered George in disgust as Fred, Blaise, and Hermione nodding, with Neville looking a bit confused.

“Dobby apologizes sir, and Dobby wishes you good luck against Snivellus Snapey,” said Dobby with a bow before the house elf disappeared.

After bidding his friends good bye and leaving before anyone could protest, Harry briefly considered contacting some of his men but he wanted Snape face to face on his own, he had a score to settle with Snape, after he had found out from Dumbledore that Snape was the one who told Voldemort part of the prophecy that lead to the Dark Lord killing his parents. Dumbledore had offered some feeble words that Snape was remorseful but Harry could smell the shit leaking out of Dumbledore’s mouth. Harry thought he could have never hated Snape any more after that, at least until he found out the reason why Dumbledore had thought that Snape was remorseful that also made him lose what little respect towards Dumbledore as a human being that he had been clinging onto.

Yes, apparently Snape and his mother were friends at Hogwarts, Harry didn’t believe it at first, but the proof he had seen left him no question in his mind that Snape was the most rotten human being that ever lived. At least Wormtail could offer up the fact that he was a spineless coward as an excuse for his treachery, Snape never came across as a coward. Cunning, calculating, always knowing when to

pick his fights, but Snape never was a coward. Lily, most wisely in Harry's opinion, had terminated their friendship after Snape had called her a Mudblood, showing his true colors, degrading someone who had selflessly shown in friendship. The fact that Snape had begged Voldemort to spare Lily, just so he could have her, not even carrying about her opinion, really revolted Harry to his stomach and made Snape lower than pond scum.

With Snape in Azkaban, Harry never had time to dwell on his need to make Snape pay for his disgusting actions, but with him out, now was the time to swerve justice.

"Is it time to eat yet?" hissed Vinny sleepily from underneath Harry's sleeve. Vinny had spent most of the days sleeping in the Ravenclaw dormitory, as it was very difficult to explain a snake to the teachers and students at Hogwarts, only joining his master when

"You just ate three fat mice three hours ago," replied Harry as he exited the passageway into Hogsmeade. "Once I finished with Snape..."

Harry looked around, hoping that Snape had not left since Dobby had told Harry of his presence.

After a few moments of careful looking around, Harry spotted the greasy hair of Snape, as his prey entered entering the abandoned and condemned Hog's Head. It appeared that no one had bought the place because there was no way to get the lingering goat smell to go away.

From outside, Yaxley spotted Harry Potter entering the Hog's Head, with a grin on his face. It was too good to be true, Yaxley could redeem himself to the Dark Lord by bringing him the person he desired the most.

"It's magic time," muttered Yaxley to his forearm. "My Lord, I will have the boy in fifteen minutes, I just you'll have everything you need ready by then."

Harry entered inside and saw Snape standing there.

“Potter, I was just about to lure you here but your presence will spare me the trouble of locating a hostage,” replied Snape before he held a vial out towards Harry. “Now, do you know what I hold in my hand Potter?”

“A common curse for hiccups,” answered Harry smartly.

“Very good Potter, I’d award you points if I was still a teacher,” said Snape. “I would suggest you surrender your wand or all of Hogsmeade will be destroyed by a deadly explosion.”

Harry paused, wondering exactly how a cure for hiccups could destroy Hogsmeade.

“Now, Potter, this potion is harmless but if I add another ingredient to the mixture, it would be dangerous,” added Snape. “That ingredient would naturally be a goat’s testicle.”

Harry failed to understand how that conclusion would come naturally but Snape was in fact the Potions Master and didn’t look like he was bluffing.

“Accio goat’s testicle!” cried Harry, using three words that he hoped he would never have a reason to utter in succession ever again and the ingredient came sailing towards Harry.

Snape angrily lashed out at Harry, blasting him halfway across the bar and raised his wand, before he held it at Harry’s throat.

Harry prepared to react but he didn’t need to, as Vinny popped out of Harry’s sleeve and sank his fangs into Snape’s wand hand. Snape grimaced in pain as the snake held onto his hand and gave Harry a chance to blast Snape right into table, with Vinny letting go before impact.

“Vile,” hissed Vinny in disgust, as biting Snape’s hand had been a very bad idea indeed and it would take weeks to get the taste out of his mouth.

Snape reached for his wand but Harry stepped on it with his foot, snapping it before Snape’s very eyes, before he levitated Snape up,

so they were eye to eye, before Harry began to break through Snape's mental defenses, like a jackhammer through pavement. Slowly by slowly, Snape's defenses were shattered until Harry was able to leaf through Snape's mind like an opened textbook before he quickly found what he wanted.

"So Umbridge broke you three out," muttered Harry, making a mental note to deal with that particular woman as soon as he was finished with Snape.

"Potter you have what you want!" yelled Snape but Harry wasn't finished, he had such a hold on Snape's mind that he could finish him off once and for all.

"Sweet dreams, Snivillus," concluded Harry in his "Barone" voice, letting Snape in on the secret just seconds before Harry used his advanced Legilimency knowledge to completely fry Snape's brain, destroying it beyond all repair.

Harry backed off, a little weary, taking a couple deep breaths. It had taken a lot of magic to do what he had done, along with a lot of hatred, but it was necessary. He looked down at Snape.

The lights were on but no one was home.

Yaxley entered the Hog's Head, before he made his move.

"Master," hissed Vinny in warning but it was too late as Yaxley had caught Harry off surprised when he was basking in his victory over Snape, grabbing his arm and disappearing him to the location where the Dark Lord was waiting.

Harry dropped down, his stomach turned from his forced form of travel and he hoisted Yaxley up into the air before he slammed him down.

"I don't know..." started Harry but he turned around, realizing that he was surrounded by twenty five Death Eaters, all with wands raised at him.

“Get him!” yelled one of the Death Eaters and Harry fired as many spells as he could against the extremely lopsided odds he was put against, while dodging as much as he could, knowing that there was no way he could fight off these many Death Eaters alone.

One spell caught Harry right in the lungs causing his breathing to stop for a few seconds.

“Quick, before he recovers!” yells one of the Death Eaters as several wooden stakes rose from the ground, and as the breath returned to Harry, he was shackled to the ground, unable to move.

Several Death Eaters carried a glass crypt, containing what looked to be a body of some sort from Harry’s vantage point, with unconnected tubes poking from the back. Seconds later, another glass crypt was carried out, something stirring inside it and placed beside it to the left of the first crypt, with the tubes from the first one being connected to the back of the second one. In the center of both crypts was a solid glass tube.

“Now remember, hold your wand steady when you begin the ritual!” lectured Bellatrix.

“We know how to control our wands, Lestrangle,” grumbled Avery.

“That’s what all men say,” scoffed Bellatrix as she walked off, allowing a group of Death Eaters room to start performing the ritual.

Harry managed to shift his weight enough to reclaim his wand and he attempted to use an unlocking charm on one of the pairs of shackles. The light from the wand connected with the lock holes, but nothing happened.

“Made of solid platinum,” explained Bellatrix calmly. “The one metal on earth that is completely impervious to all magic.”

Harry gritted his teeth, as he looked above at the light show that began above the crypts. Swirling vortexes of dark magic never boded well for Harry.

“Excellent the spells have been cast,” said Bellatrix as she turned to the crypts. “Now we can begin the transference of the memories from the body in crypt A until the body in crypt B, that will be stabilized by taking the blood of Harry Potter and our glorious master shall rise again?”

“What are you explaining it for Lestrage, we already found out what was going to happen five minutes ago?” asked one of the Death Eaters.

“I wasn’t explaining it to you, I was being courteous and explaining it to our guest,” said Bellatrix in a sweet voice as she nodded towards Harry, before her eyes flashed with anger as she turned to her fellow Death Eaters. “DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?”

The Death Eaters shook their heads, as Bellatrix had that psychotic look in her eye and bad things tended to happen when she had that look in her eye. She had pulled out a knife and a vial before she turned to Harry, who not only knew what was coming, but also knew he wasn’t going to like it.

“Hush little baby don’t you cry, or Bella will stab you in the eye,” cooed Bellatrix before she psychotically slashed Harry’s right arm, drawing blood which she quickly siphoned into the vial and walked over, pouring it into the glass tube.

The tube illuminated in deep red color as large silvery strands were pumped from the crypt to the left into the crypt on the right, with the blood inside the tube flowing into the right crypt as well.

Seconds later, the crypt on the left burst into black flames and the crypt was consumed, leaving nothing left, not even the smallest cinder. The right crypt burst open and from it emerged the imposing figure of Lord Voldemort.

And here’s your chapter, you have no idea what it went through to get here.

Also, I can now reveal that a Twisted Timeline will be Twenty Five Chapters in total.

Chapter 19: Showdown.

Voldemort stepped from the crypt and calmly walked forward. Seconds later he turned to his Death Eaters, who were on their knees, bowing before him. With no emotion on his face whatsoever, Voldemort stood straight, surveying the Death Eaters through his chilling slit like red eyes.

“Rise,” ordered Voldemort softly and the Death Eaters did as they told, bringing themselves to their feet, as Voldemort turned slightly, not even bothering to acknowledge Harry, at least not at the moment.

Harry bent his head slightly to get a better look around. The chains were made of solid platinum as Bellatrix indicated. They could not be magically unlocked, melted, broken, or damaged in any way magically whatsoever. The most powerful blasting spell he could muster didn't even place a scratch on the metal. He could not break through the chains and with no way to contact anyone, there appeared to be no way out for the foreseeable future.

“My return tonight could not have been possible without the sacrifice of Peter Pettigrew. No matter how much his actions were motivated by cowardice and a desire for power, without him our campaign would not be moved forward, so I request one minute of silence in the memory of Peter Pettigrew,” said Voldemort calmly and the Death Eaters bowed their heads at the order of the Dark Lord. After exactly fifty nine seconds, Voldemort broke the silence. “And that moment has passed. It would be foolish to remain enamored with the past but rather we look towards a brand new future.”

The Death Eaters cheered but Voldemort offered no indication that he had heard them, but rather his expression remained rather stoic.

“A decade previous my power had been broken, not due to the skill, determination, or power of those who oppose us, but rather by a previously unheard of magical phenomenon,” continued Voldemort. “I had come to kill young Harry Potter on that night. His parents, foolishly, had attempted to defy me and they fell like many others have. Then, the Killing Curse, the one foolproof way of disposing of any living being, something that comes as naturally to me as drawing breath, was rebounded back towards me when I had attempted to

dispose of Harry Potter. I must admit, my friends, there was a small window of opportunity where escape may have been possible but I stood transfixed, drawn by natural curiosity, wondering exactly how this could have occurred, what made this one small child special enough to rebound my own magic against me. The curiosity was my downfall and my body was obliterated, but my spirit remained intact, as throughout the years I had become much more than a mere human and thus had succeeded in obtaining immortality.”

Voldemort only paused long enough to draw breath.

“For many years, I had pondered what could have happened and the answer, I reasoned, was locked inside the boy’s blood,” concluded Voldemort. “In addition to having the power that I once held, I now also have obtained the power of the one who has defeated me and I stand before you on this evening, reborn, more powerful than I have ever been previously.”

The Death Eaters cheered and Voldemort allowed them to have their moment of fun, but did not smile, not for the briefest instant as he turned his head slowly towards Harry.

“And, I would be remiss if I didn’t also recognize young Harry’s presence, because his blood was as crucial as Wormtail’s sacrifice,” continued Voldemort as he turned to a quartet of Death Eaters. “Remove him from his restraints, I wish to speak to him face to face.”

The group of Death Eaters walked over towards Harry. Harry was sorely disappointed that they were smart enough to take his wand before they went to work, each removing a key, which they placed in the lock holes and the platinum shackles unsnapped. Harry was roughly pulled up by the arms by two of the Death Eaters, as he stared right in Voldemort’s face.

“Hello Harry,” said Voldemort softly. “It has been a long time since we have last met.”

Harry just fixed his face into a fearful expression, masking the hatred that he had for Voldemort. A problem also reared its head. Harry had been spending years preparing for the time where he would have to face against Voldemort but he was missing one important element.

With all of his planning, Harry still did not know exactly how he was going to finish him off for good.

“Do not worry, Harry, I am not going to kill you,” remarked Voldemort. “I wish to speak to you and you will not do me any good dead.”

“What do you want to talk to me about?” asked Harry, hoping that his voice sounded childish and innocent enough that Voldemort would not be expecting Harry to strike, when he had a workable plan to strike that is.

“We are quite similar Harry,” said Voldemort softly. “Orphaned at a very young age, forced to live with those did not understand us at all. Forced to take actions to rectify matters out of their control. You may argue, rightfully so, that I killed your parents. It was an unfortunate necessity, they were to the point of no return, they would have followed Dumbledore blindly to their deaths even if I did not have a hand with them. You may also assume it is your duty to fight me.”

“Well, the prophecy does indicate that I might have to,” replied Harry and he had said the magic word that had grabbed Voldemort’s attention.

“If you know the prophecy, then it would be for the benefit of all for you to tell me it, to put us on equal ground,” prompted Voldemort quietly.

“The prophecy, talks about the one that will defeat the dark lord will be born to those who thrice defied him, which is the part you know, correct,” answered Harry and Voldemort gave a calm nod, to confirm what the Boy-Who-Lived-To-Meddle-With-Time had said. “The next part states, the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal and as long as the Marked One lives, the Dark Lord’s immortality will be secured. Should the Marked One perish, than the Dark Lord can be destroyed.”

Voldemort stared right into the boy’s eyes, to determine the truth of his words. After about a minute of intense, but subtle searching, Voldemort found no hint of deception. No wizard could protect his mind well enough to fool Lord Voldemort and certainly no eleven year old child could as well. With the fact that Potter was telling the truth all

too evident, it was of uttermost importance to bring the boy over to his side.

"Very well Harry, that confirms a suspicion of mine of why Dumbledore would put his savior in the hands of Muggles who would most likely despise you," remarked Voldemort. "The Muggles be susceptible to partake in abusive actions that would wear your assertiveness down. You would gladly embrace Dumbledore and blindly follow his actions. He would use you to run a fools errand, a suicide mission against myself, which he would plan to lead to both of our demises, all for the greater good, I'm sure."

"You think," replied Harry, in a mostly childish tone, but the mental intent of the message had been rather sarcastic in nature.

"It is a reason why I am offering you a chance at power that none your age could not even begin to comprehend," continued Voldemort. "Yes, Harry, I am offering you a place right beside me."

"You want me to join you?" asked Harry in astonishment.

"I assure you I did not make this offer on a whim, and I had came to the conclusion that it would be a grievous crime to squander power such as yours, Harry Potter," said Voldemort softly, as he peered right into Harry's eyes. "By my side, you would learn magic beyond your wildest dreams, magic beyond the comprehension of the population at large. You would be my most trusted follower."

"My lord, I thought I was your most trusted follower!" whined Bellatrix childishly, causing several Death Eaters to look at her like she was insane at her sudden outburst, interrupting the Dark Lord.

"Be silent, Bella," ordered Voldemort shortly as he turned away, ignoring Bellatrix pouting at the thought of someone else being higher on the Death Eater food chain than here. "I not only offer you this training, but I also offer training to your guardian, the feared and legendary Boss Barone. He has already succeeded in bringing the Ministry to a standstill before. By my side, he would be untouchable, in both the Magical and Muggle world."

Harry looked at Voldemort, hoping his face held an awestruck look, as he began to run over his escape plan in his mind, it was a one in a million shot to work, but right now, those sounded like pretty damn good odds.

"I can give you all you desire Harry Potter should you join me but if you refuse me, I can take all that you already have," said Voldemort in a chilling tone, that caused the hairs of Harry's neck to stand up, as the Death Eaters shifted Harry's position slightly, as Voldemort turned. "The prophecy indicates that it would serve you well to join me. So take your rightful place beside me, Harry Potter. Kneel down before Lord Voldemort."

"So, you want me to join you," repeated Harry slowly and Voldemort didn't show any emotion other than a stiff, cold nod. "I must admit that your offer does some intriguing and I'm tempted, but I'm going to have to pass."

At that instant, in an extremely sophisticated and revolutionary maneuver, Harry struck one of the Death Eaters in the face with his elbow. The other Death Eater was subdued, when Harry skillfully drove his knee right into his groin, before Harry ducked and dodged, before he snatched up his wand.

After dinner, Hermione looked around; she would have thought that Harry would have returned to Hogwarts in good spirits, having finally gotten his revenge on Snape. While Harry hadn't been all that specific why he hated Snape so much, Hermione gathered that it was rather important but she wished Harry would not have been barging into Hogsmeade alone.

Now, with Harry gone for over an hour, Hermione feared that he had overestimated his abilities and something might have happened. Quickly, she moved to find the first trustworthy adult and while Sirius loosely fitted the definition of "adult" he would have to do.

"Sirius, have you seen Harry lately?" asked Hermione in a frantic voice.

"No, I can't say I have seen him, not since Lunch at any rate," responded Sirius with a frown. "I'd thought he would be with you."

"No, I haven't seen him since..." stated Hermione slowly. "Well, let's just say that Harry may have heard about a certain escaped fugitive being in Hogsmeade, so he decided to investigate."

"Harry didn't go after Snape, did he Hermione?" asked Remus, who had just walked off. "You just let him go..."

"You know how Harry is, he would have stunned all of us if he tried to stop him, he wanted to deal with Snape personally before he was brought in and I didn't see which way he went either," said Hermione in a irritated tone. "He could have taken any of the secret passages into Hogsmeade after he left that corridor."

A horrid realization just reached Hermione.

"It was a trap, Snape had to have been working on behalf for someone else, whomever broke him out of Azkaban," voiced Hermione.

"Very astute observation Miss Granger," remarked a calm voice and all three joined to see Flamel standing there. "Rumors of Snape being sighted in Hogsmeade had just reached me and I was hoping to catch Mr. Potter in time. Vengeance is a rather unfortunate emotion, makes fools out of the most rational of us, and sadly, my inability to get to Harry in time most likely gave him the opportunity to reach Hogsmeade."

"Yes, the way Harry was talking about Snape, he might be more reckless than normally, but I think Harry might have taken some type of precaution," said Hermione, who didn't sound as certain as she normally did. "But you don't think that we might be able to find something that might shed more light on the situation in Hogsmeade."

"Excellent idea Hermione, perhaps if Professor Flamel would join us, the three of us could go to Hogsmeade to have a look around, so Hermione if you excuse us, we'll be off right now" said Remus evenly.

"Now wait a minute, I'm not going to stand here when Harry could be in danger," challenged Hermione and as Remus opened his mouth to protest, Flamel raised his hand.

“Allow her to come, she may be privy to information regarding young Mr. Potter that you may not know that may shed some light on what happened to him,” said Flamel firmly and without another word, Hermione joined Sirius, Remus, and Flamel as they made their way to Hogsmeade.

“My Lord, the boy, he’ll get away!” yelled one of the Death Eaters before a loud crack echoed through the field once Harry’s spell connected with his opponent’s skull.

“Be still, I am well aware of the situation,” said Voldemort calmly as Harry vainly tried to disapparate, but Voldemort had enchanted the area around them to prevent this elementary means of escape.

The good news was that even Voldemort had limitations on how far he could extend this anti-apparation field when dealing with an area outside. The bad news was it was very difficult to locate where the enchantments ended when he was being cursed at from every direction. It was only sheer luck that Harry managed to avoid being struck.

Harry moved forward, towards a hill, reasoning that he could lose them there, but Voldemort merged with the dark shadows in the field before he reappeared right in front of Harry.

“Guess I couldn’t leave without incident could I...Riddle,” said Harry smoothly but even the use of his real name did not cause Voldemort to react with anything other than indifference.

“At one time that name could have been used to taunt me, to stir emotions of anger, but all my humanity has been stripped, in exchange for the power that the ritual has given for this new body,” responded Voldemort coolly. “I must acknowledge that it is quite interesting that you know this, but it does not change the fact that you will join me one way or another. CRUCIO!”

The pain was more intense than Harry had remembered. His body felt as if it was being assaulted by a thousand flaming knives at once, the pain had given Harry the need to claw out his own eyes, just to take his mind off. It seemed to last for hours, but really Voldemort had

only held him under for less than ten seconds as he released the curse.

“Respect is a virtue, one that you will learn, beside me, so after that lesson, I must ask you to join me once again, my offer remains the same as before,” said Voldemort as he stared down at Harry, who just barely managed to get to his feet amongst all of the pain.

“Drop dead,” muttered Harry, the gloves were off as far as Harry was concerned with the first Unforgivable and Harry withdrew his secret weapon.

A loud bang and a bullet impacted right into the chest of Voldemort. Harry looked up and Voldemort didn't seem injured, but rather unimpressed, as he waved his wand, pulling the bullet out of his chest, slightly ripping his robe in the process. Before his eyes, Harry saw a bloody wound right where the bullet had impacted but seconds later, the skin had magically healed itself, leaving no indication that Voldemort had ever been shot at all.

With a wave of his wand, Voldemort removed the gun out of Harry's hand, causing it to crumble into dust with a second wave.

“Now do you have any more toys I need to take away, Harry?” asked Voldemort calmly. “Or can we proceed with our business like wizards, instead of bringing Muggle trivialities into this?”

“If a duel is what you want Riddle, then you've got one,” responded Harry calmly.

“Potter, I believe you may be making a bit of an error in judgment,” said Voldemort as the Death Eaters watched intently. “It would be best for both of us if you joined me.”

“No, actually it'd be best for you, Riddle,” argued Harry. “Let's face it, you just want another warm body that you can throw out there against your enemies, another wand to fight your battles for you, while you sit back and be feared by all.”

“Merely your opinion Potter and I would highly recommend you not put it across as fact,” said Voldemort.

“Oh, but I got one fact, I blasted you out of your body when I was one, what do you think I can do to you now?” asked Harry. “You want me to join because you know you can’t beat me.”

“Yes, but according the prophecy as long as I live, I cannot die,” challenged Voldemort calmly.

“True, but the one thing that I did agree with that Dumbledore said, that there are things way worse than death,” said Harry, who couldn’t believe his luck how Voldemort was taking his slightly embellished version of the prophecy as the gospel truth. “In fact, considering your twisted ideals of blood purity, you should be the one bowing down to me.”

“What do mean by that Potter?” hissed Voldemort in disgust, showing the slightest hint of anger for the first time and Harry was pleased, there was still some humanity left in Voldemort, no matter how many rituals he went under to try to eliminate it. Now all Harry had to do was bait Voldemort into a formal duel.

“Well my mother was a witch, Muggleborn yes, but still a witch and my father was a wizard,” responded Harry smugly. “While your mother was a pureblood, your father was nothing but a simple Muggle, not a drop of magic in him. So guess what Riddle, my lineage is purer than yours. So, you should be the one bowing down before me.”

The Death Eaters sounded angered at the blatant lies that Harry Potter was spreading about their Master. To say that the Dark Lord’s father was a Muggle, Potter had crossed the line.

“Bow Potter,” ordered Voldemort stiffly and Harry gave a mocking little bow, as Voldemort did the same.

In an instant, Harry sent a bludgeoning curse right at Voldemort’s head in mid bow. Voldemort wasn’t going to fight fair, so why should Harry? Voldemort was caught off surprise, but he managed to avoid the brunt of the curse. By the time Voldemort had regained his dueling position, Harry whipped around and shot thick ropes from his wand. Voldemort flicked his wrist and the ropes burst into flames,

utterly destroyed before they even made it halfway towards Voldemort.

Harry attempted to find cover but once again, Voldemort morphed into the shadows, before he appeared right in front of Harry and a sent a jet of black light towards Harry.

“PROTEGO!” shouted Harry, giving the shield a little extra power by verbalizing his spell and Voldemort’s attack had sliced completely through the shield, causing Harry’s heels to drag into the ground as he was pushed back about thirty feet, before the black light completely faded and Harry collapsed, slightly weakened but he had to pull himself up to his feet.

“Imperio,” said Voldemort and Harry felt a light headed feeling come up, as the Imperius Curse washed over him, his mind becoming blissfully blank. “Join me Harry.”

“No,” responded Harry weakly.

“Bow down to me, admit that you were mistaken in challenging me,” said Voldemort with a little more force as Harry felt his spine bend slightly, but he struggled, he would not be forced into submission by Voldemort.

“I will not,” said Harry.

“Don’t fight it Harry, admit the truth, embrace reality,” said Voldemort in his most forceful voice yet, as every bit of Harry’s will power was tested. “Bow to me, bow before Lord Voldemort.”

“I WON’T!” shouted Harry and a large of wall of fire burst from Harry’s wand right towards Voldemort. A couple Death Eaters who were unfortunate enough to be in the path lit up like Roman Candles and seconds later, they were reduced to nothing but ashes.

The smoke began to clear and Harry hoped that his little burst of accidental magic had barbequed Voldemort to an early grave, but much to his horror, Voldemort calmly walked forward, his robes completely burned off and his body only covered in third degree burns. Seconds later, the burns healed, leaving no trace of injury and

Harry shuddered as he saw far more of Voldemort than he ever wanted to.

"I must say impressive Potter, you came closer than expected to injuring me," responded Voldemort in a bored voice, as he had the decency to wave his wand and conjure a robe to cover himself up. "Magic such as that should not be allowed to go to waste and all will be forgiven, you will still be allowed to join me, just kneel down and accept the truth, Harry."

"You know, Riddle, it seems to me you have a perverse desire to have eleven year old boys kneel down before you," responded Harry coolly, unable to help himself, his younger self needing to share this observation with Voldemort, despite the objections of his older self to keep it quiet. "Perhaps it is a problem you should devote more time to, get some professional help, perhaps you might find a hobby beyond attempting to take over the Wizarding World."

"Potter you are insane for mocking the Dark Lord like that," muttered Bellatrix in a rational tone but Voldemort paid her no mind.

"It appears that I still have a few lessons that you need to be taught Harry," said Voldemort softly. "Crucio."

This time Harry was ready, he summoned an unfortunate Death Eater towards him. A human body wasn't meant to be summoned so naturally, several bones were broken as the Death Eater was in front of Harry, suffering the full brunt of Voldemort's attack, screaming out in utter agony despite being only under the curse for a few seconds.

"I am surprised at the cowardice showed by you, by using someone else as a shield," declared Voldemort calmly.

"Toe-may-toe, Toe-mah-toe, Riddle what you may call cowardice, I call smart and oh by the way, CATCH!" shouted Harry as he used the Death Eater as a projectile, throwing him straight at Voldemort.

Voldemort slashed his wand, ripping the Death Eater in half before he could connect, reasoning that he was no one important. Blood splattered everywhere as the nameless, faceless Death Eater met his demise.

At Hogsmeade, Flamel, Sirius, Remus, and Hermione walked around. The village wasn't all that busy at this moment, which made it ideal to have a look around.

"Do you notice anything peculiar?" asked Sirius as he pointed to the doors of the Hog's Head, which were halfway open.

"Yes, for a place that has been condemned for years, it does bare investigating considering the fact that it appears to have been recently visited," said Flamel. "It may be a good idea to have our wands ready, as there is a good chance that Snape may yet still be inside."

With that the group walked inside, Hermione looking the most anxious, as there appeared to be no sign that Harry had ever visited Hogsmeade.

Sirius stopped and his eyes widened in surprise as he looked down at the figure slumped against the wall, his eyes completely blank and drool hanging from his mouth

"Well, Snape is here, Headmaster Flamel," said Sirius as he looked at his long time enemy, in his blank eyes. "Physically at least, mentally is a whole other matter entirely"

Flamel stepped back, it took a lot to shock him at his age, but he had never seen anything like what had happened with Snape. Bending down, Flamel decided to take a peek into Snape's mind and he recoiled in horror.

"Snape's mind looks like an equivalent of a city struck by a hurricane, a tornado, an earthquake, a tsunami, and a nuclear missile all simultaneously," said Flamel darkly.

"It's really that bad," said Remus seriously.

"Perhaps worse, I've been known to understate the matter but it really doesn't matter, as Snape's brain is beyond all repair," said Flamel. "Plus, it appears that young Mr. Potter's trail has run cold as he is not here."

“But if Snape didn’t have anything to do with Harry coming back, then that means...” stated Hermione.

“Indeed, then someone else is behind this,” said Flamel.

“It couldn’t be him, could it?” asked Sirius quietly.

“It’s highly likely, and as much as I loathe getting the Ministry involved, they may like to know that the Boy-Who-Lived is currently missing,” remarked Flamel. “Not that they can do much but at least they should know.”

A net whizzed through the air in an attempt to trap Voldemort but Voldemort calmly shredded the net, as Harry leaned forward, breathing heavily. Fatigue was beginning to set in. His limits when he was eleven were much more than when he was six but at the same time they were not even a fraction of what was necessary to fight Voldemort. Voldemort was more powerful than Harry had ever remembered him and as an overage wizard in the other timeline, Harry had to admit that he could barely hold his own on his best day.

“I can see it, Harry, you’re becoming fatigued, the strain of performing magic is getting to you, it is much more than anyone your age should overtake,” remarked Voldemort as he stood there. “In the end, no matter what, your best shot isn’t strong enough to...”

Harry slashed his wand, sending a black light through the air right at Voldemort and Voldemort staggered, his cheek cut open, blood dripping down from it as Harry’s knees buckled and he collapsed to the ground, as Voldemort placed his hand on his cheek, as it didn’t seem to be healing as quickly as his previous injuries had.

Voldemort turned as Harry pulled himself up, the wound slowly closing but a chilling expression was etched upon Voldemort’s face. Harry stepped back, as the ground shook, Voldemort enraged that a mere eleven year old boy made him taste his own blood.

Harry suddenly felt himself struck in the face by a force that was similar to being punched in the face by a hand made of solid steel. Just after he skidded to the ground, Harry was ripped from the ground and flung around by a raw burst of power by Voldemort. Harry

smashed right to the ground, nearly shaking the ground below him, wincing in pain. There was no doubt that he had suffered a couple of cracked ribs at the very least.

Voldemort yanked Harry up by the limbs roughly, before Harry found himself pulled forward, face to face with Voldemort, who looked absolutely murderous at that moment.

“Do I amuse you now, Potter?” asked Voldemort coldly just before he flung Harry up into the air, and smashed him down, before magically dragging him all over the ground, and then roughly pulling Harry inside the sky again. Voldemort withdrew his wand and Harry was sent spiraling to the ground. Just in time, Harry avoided falling right on his head, his right arm taking the brunt of the fall. Harry bit his tongue, as several bones in his arm shattered and recoiled as he saw his right arm was bent at a disgusting angle.

Voldemort stepped forward as Harry looked up with him, in pain. Vainly, Harry attempted to disapparate, but unfortunately, he still hadn't reached the edge of Voldemort's enchantments and seconds later, Harry found himself roughly ripped back to his feet. Voldemort drew his arm back and jabbed his wand right at Harry's head. Seconds later, Harry found himself on the ground, victimized by the magical equivalent of a knockout punch and he would not be surprised if he had suffered a concussion from the impact.

“C'mon Riddle, my Uncle Vernon could hit harder than that,” slurred Harry, blood splattering from his mouth and Voldemort ripped Harry from the ground using his wand, before another raw burst of magic flung Harry forward. With a sickening thud, Harry landed face first onto some hard rocks.

“I do hope that's up to your standards, Potter,” hissed Voldemort coldly, as stepped forward, before Harry was once again levitated into the air, his face cut up. Voldemort pulled Harry forward, until he was right above Voldemort. Blood splashed from the air, Voldemort taking a shower in Harry's blood.

Abruptly, Voldemort let Harry go and Harry free fell right to the ground, landing on both feet. A loud crack and Harry found himself unable to get back to his feet, the pain unbearable, when he realized that he

could add two shattered ankles to the list of injuries he suffered against Voldemort.

"Beneath me, where you belong Harry," said Voldemort softly as his slit like red eyes were fixed firmly on Harry, before he dropped his voice low so only Harry could hear him. "Your actions against me today raised far more questions than answers. The most prominent is that while I avoid children, you do not act like any child that I have ever seen and I can only come towards one logical explanation."

Harry winced. It appeared that Voldemort had figured out that Harry Potter and Boss Barone were one and the same but Voldemort looked away from Harry, as if disgusted for some reason.

"You're not the real Harry Potter, but merely a decoy sent to Hogwarts by Barone, to fool the world at large, while the real Potter receives magical training far beyond the scope that Hogwarts offers," said Voldemort as if this was the most elementary thing in the world, but it was clear that Voldemort was none too happy about what he perceived as a flaw within himself. By his new theory, he took the wrong person's blood. "The simpletons of the world may be fooled, but I will not be any longer."

"You have me pegged, Riddle, don't you," said Harry in a weak, yet sarcastic voice. "I can assure you I am very much the genuine article."

"No, eleven year old can put up that much of a struggle or know that much magic," hissed Voldemort as Harry awkwardly waved his wand behind his back, and he was mere centimeters away from the enchantment barriers. "So while the prophecy may state that it would not be in my best interests to kill Harry Potter, you are not Harry Potter."

"Then who am I?" demanded Harry as he managed to slide himself past the enchantments, before he attempted to summon up his remaining strength, knowing full well that this desperate move could put him out of commission for weeks.

"It matters little," said Voldemort curtly as he raised his wand, pointing it towards Harry. "AVADA KEDAVRA!"

The jet of blinding green light met Harry just at the moment he disappeared to a safe location.

Chapter Twenty: The Death March of Boss Barone:

All Harry Potter could see was complete and utter darkness after being struck by the Killing Curse the second he disappeared. He did not dare open his eyes, but one thing was certain, he was still alive, if one could call it that in his condition. It would not be a shock if his body was splattered all over time and space or worse, he could have been sent back in time once again.

Harry could feel his arms and legs, always a good sign, even though there was unbearable pain shooting through them. Voldemort had done quite the number on him and Harry's eyes flickered open slightly. Amazingly he wasn't splinched and he came very close to his destination. Crawling down the stone pathway, drops of blood splashed to the ground, as Harry looked around, to confirm that he had in fact landed outside Number Twelve Grimmauld Place as intended.

"Kreacher, out now!" rasped Harry, hoping the hated house elf in the Black family was able to hear him and it was of utmost importance that he got inside.

"The traitorous master's godson call for Kreacher?" asked Kreacher.

"Yes, I did you dumbshit elf!" snapped Harry angrily. "Get me inside now, and make it snappy."

"As young master wishes," replied Kreacher as he transported Harry inside the Black ancestral home. The home didn't hold its grimness that he did in the other timeline, after Harry had it painted with bright and vibrant colors, before he filled it with Muggle electronics. Harry didn't have much of a use for many of the things he had in the house, but he relished the opportunity to cause Sirius's mother to have a fit by all the Muggle things he was bring in.

Harry was sat down on a couch in the living room and Kreacher looked at Harry.

"Young master might want to get himself to a hospital," muttered Kreacher but Harry just ignored him.

“DOBBY!” yelled Harry and Dobby the house elf appeared, but his usual jovial expression left his face when he saw the state.

“What has happened to Harry Potter sir?” inquired Dobby. “Dobby must insist that sir be brought to St. Mungos to see a healer.”

“That would be good Dobby, just needed to clear my head for a few more minutes, before being transported again,” replied Harry. “If you could get me to St. Mungos Dobby and then inform the others that I will fill him in after I’m safely there.”

“As sir wishes,” answered Dobby before the house elf transported his master to St. Mungos, so he could reveal the proper healing from the trained healers at St. Mungos.

“Kreacher just suggested that,” muttered Kreacher under his breath. “Sometimes I wish that someone would just get it over with and decapitate Kreacher, but Kreacher will have to cut himself some more until that happens.”

With that, Kreacher made his way upstairs, to continue to cut his wrists with a razor blade because of his poor, dearly departed mistress.

Reginald Weaver, the Minister of Magic, wondered why he even campaigned for the position. His intention was to increase the manpower of the Auror Department, who was the most under funded department in the Ministry. Yet, the Wizengamot had refused to endorse two acts that would step up the Auror recruitment efforts and pour more money in the department. It became even clearer to Weaver that the inmates were in fact running the asylum at the Ministry and the Minister was only as effective as how much arse he or she kissed. There were sanctions in place to prevent the wide spread sacking of long term Ministry employees, many of which who were part of the problem. And sadly, he did not have the political capital to get rid of that many influential people. The sharks that infested the Ministry would sense what he was doing and swarm in for the attack, ending his career before it had go too far. Sadly, Weaver concluded he would have to play an extremely political game if he wanted to get even moderate reforms in the Auror Department, which was contrary to his direct

“Enter,” said Weaver in a clipped voice as he heard someone knocking on his door and one of his very frantic looking aides entered the office. “Yes, Morgan, what is it?”

“Minister, Harry Potter, you know the Boy-Who-Lived, well word has it he’s been taken to St. Mungos,” replied Morgan quickly. “He’s not in good shape at all...”

“Did anyone tell you what happened?” asked Weaver in a business like tone of voice.

“No, he refuses to say anything, he seems rather shaken up, they are doing the best to treat his injuries, but he’ll survive,” replied Morgan.

“Good,” remarked Weaver, as he would have to deal with the boy’s infamous guardian, Barone, who had a record of making mince meat out of Ministry officials. “Get Bones and tell her to meet me in the atrium in fifteen minutes. She might want to question the boy herself, as this may be a situation of grave concern that the entire Ministry must know about to protect the magical people of Britain.”

Several hours later, Harry Potter was in fact on the road of recovery. Thanks to the vast amount of gold he had, he could afford to pay for the best and most prompt medical care that St. Mungos had to offer. Most of the damage was fixed, but still Harry was a little battered and beaten from the assault by Lord Voldemort. A few of Harry’s injuries would have to heal naturally, but for the most part, he was in a lot better shape than he was when first showed up at the hospital so that was counted as a victory.

A healer entered Harry’s room at that moment, breaking him out of his thoughts.

“Mr. Potter, there are some visitors for you waiting outside, but I’ll tell them to wait if you aren’t up to visiting them,” informed the healer.

“No, please, I need company,” answered Harry and the healer stepped back to allow, Sirius, Remus, and Hermione to enter the room. All of them were looking at Harry with various states of irritation, and Hermione stood there with her hands on her hips, biting her lip,

Harry just knew she had a rant on the tip of her tongue, but was keeping it in, out of respect for the other patients. "Hi."

"Don't you dare hi me, Harry Potter?" hissed Hermione. "After what you've been through I would hope you wouldn't be so reckless, I thought you would know better. What were you thinking?"

"Actually Hermione that's a good question and the correct answer would be absolutely nothing," replied Harry. "The fact remains I wasn't really expecting to step out the door and nearly get killed by Voldemort today. I knew the day was coming but I didn't think it would be this soon."

"Thanks to some petty revenge that I don't even know why you were getting revenge, you nearly got yourself killed," ranted Hermione. "By Voldemort, the most powerful dark wizard of all time, and look at you, you look like you've got hit by a bus, a train, and then got a building dropped on you."

"Feel like it to, actually," muttered Harry. "Surviving the Killing Curse again does do that to you but believe me I looked and felt a heck of a lot worse once I got away from Lord Voldemort."

"That inspires me with a great deal of hope," replied Hermione sarcastically but she stopped. "What do you mean you survived the Killing Curse again?"

"Voldemort sent the spell at me in an attempt to put me six feet under because he's Lord Voldemort," respond Harry before he whispered in an undertone. "Also, he didn't think I was Harry Potter because I was way to mature. He thought I was a decoy planted by Barone and I can't really say much more about what else happened here, as the walls do have ears."

"Well to be fair, it's not like you act like a child most of the time," said Remus, breaking the silence

"Can't act like something that well since I've been one year old," said Harry and the room went silent. "Still, my condition could be a lot worse."

“How?” demanded Hermione.

“I could be dead,” replied Harry in a dismissive voice and Hermione sputtered, unable to think quickly enough to formulate a response.

“Well Hermione he does have a point,” said Sirius calmly.

“Be serious for a minute please,” said Remus and Sirius opened his mouth. “Don’t you dare even say it, that joke was old about ten minutes into our first year.”

“Well, Harry is still alive and while I’m not exactly thrilled with his decision to run off with any backup, I believe that he couldn’t have predicted what happened today happening,” said Sirius.

“Yes, I’ve learned my lesson and now I’ve figured out what I must do,” concluded Harry.

“And what would that be Harry?” asked Remus.

“Many have gone up against Voldemort and never recover but I will recover and I’m going after Voldemort when the time is right,” whispered Harry in undertone. “The time won’t be right for a while but now, as I sit here recovering from my grievous injuries, I’m going to keep Voldemort on his toes until it’s time for us to duel again.”

Harry grew silent as he heard approaching footsteps.

“The others wanted to come as well but Professor Flamel wouldn’t allow that many people to leave the school at once,” muttered Hermione. “I should really be getting back soon anyway, since I now know you’re okay, I can tell the others, who are freaking out about you being dead.”

“Yes, go do that,” replied Harry.

“Remus, why don’t you take Hermione back, I’ll come back in a little bit, I need to talk to Harry,” responded Sirius and Remus nodded.

“Bye Hermione, Remus,” voiced Harry as Sirius turned to Harry once they left.

“Okay, exactly what did happen, Harry?” asked Sirius.

“Basically, after I finished Snape, one of Voldemort’s Death Eaters grabbed me, forced me to apparate, I was leapt on by twenty five Death Eaters, Voldemort was resurrected, when had words, some of which he took offense of, I nearly died, and that’s about all the details I can give until we’re in a more secure room,” said Harry without taking a breath.

“Fair enough,” replied Sirius but the footsteps stopped as the healer poked her head in once again.

“Mr. Potter, sorry for disturbing you again, but there are more visitors, the Minister of Magic in fact and the Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement, they both want to speak to you, they are demanding to know what happened” remarked the healer.

“Better get this over with,” remarked Sirius and Harry nodded, adopting the face of a traumatized eleven year old, as the healer stepped back to allow Madam Bones and Minister Weave to enter the room.

“The healer said you wanted to know what happened to me,” replied Harry in a slightly intimidated voice.

“That’s correct,” replied Weaver, who would have rather dealt with the most hardened dark wizards then children. After all, he had to deal with enough juvenile behavior at the Ministry.

“Take your time Harry, no need to rush but we really need to know what happened,” added Madam Bones.

“Well I went for a walk outside the school, to get some fresh air, and a man attacked me,” replied Harry in a shaky voice. “He transported me there, and used my blood in what he said was a ritual that resurrected V-v-v-v-oldemort.”

The two Ministry officials flinched slightly at the sound of Voldemort’s name.

"He's back," whispered Madam Bones but Weaver looked at Harry with a slightly skeptical look.

"Even if it isn't You-Know-Who, even if it is someone posing as him, it's still a matter of concern, especially the condition the boy was said to show up in when we interviewed the healers," muttered Weaver. "The Ministry's not going to like this, but what choice do we have?"

"Harry, could you tell us how you escaped?" asked Madam Bones.

"I'm not sure, I hit my head and a jet of green light was sent at me, the next thing I knew, I was here," replied Harry, who made sure to shake in terror, as he talked about Voldemort. "I never want to see him, he had slit red eyes, his skin was white, he was creepy."

"Thank you that will be all," replied Madam Bones as she joined Weaver in walking off.

"I almost expected him to be a bit more put together, even after what happened, I don't think Barone had all that much of an influence on him," muttered Weaver. "You'd think he'd be a bit more hardened."

"Now, Minister, to be fair, he's an eleven year old who from all indications just barely survived an encounter with He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named," replied Bones. "Plus, many might be relieved Mr. Potter isn't another version of Barone."

Weaver didn't answer. As Minister, he had to disapprove of Barone. Personally, he didn't have a problem with Barone, as the only people he targeted were part of the cancer that infested the Ministry of Magic.

A week later, Harry was cleared to return to Hogwarts and returned he did, to a barrage of questions about his absence. Harry blew everyone off. Needless to say news about the return of Lord Voldemort reached the Wizarding World. There were many skeptics, but there were also those who were terrified out of their wits. Many of which would have never seen even the glimpse of Voldemort but had family members who had perished either directly or indirectly by his hand. The Ministry was only marginally better than it was the last time around, but if Voldemort gathered enough resources, it was highly probable that they could be eliminated in a matter of hours. Harry was

once again in the uneasy position of having to save a world that he only cared slightly about. It was quite lucky that Harry had a personal vendetta against Voldemort, otherwise he would take his friends and his organization to an uncharted island in the Bahamas and basically let Voldemort have a party. It was quite fortunate that Voldemort had attempted to kill Harry yet again and Harry just had to return the favor.

Harry had completed his first year for the second time, and school wise, he thought it had went as well as expected. In fact, other than the Voldemort returning to full power and Umbridge breaking convicts out of Azkaban, it was a rather calm year at Hogwarts. On the train, Harry sat with Blaise, Neville, Hermione, Fred, and George, as they rapidly reached the station at King's Cross.

"You know, despite the fact I was nervous at first about Hogwarts, I'm really going to miss it for two months," remarked Neville.

"Yeah, I know we complain about school all the time, but once we leave for the year, it kind of leaves an empty feeling," replied George.

"Yeah the only people we can prank is our family and let's face it, they know all of our tricks by now," said Fred but Harry just sat back, barely talking at all, the moment he left the train, there was some unfinished business to attend to.

"So what are you planning to do this summer, Harry?" asked Blaise.

"Prepare for the next time Voldemort and I meet," replied Harry calmly, as he paused for the mandatory dance on his grave.

"Well besides that," amended Blaise.

"Until Voldemort is six feet over and I'm doing a victory dance, there will be time for little else," said Harry.

"And when do you think that will be anyway?" asked Blaise.

"Unless Voldemort slips in the shower and breaks his neck or some kind of freak accident like that I'm locked into facing Voldemort for quite some time," concluded Harry in an absolute dismal voice.

"We can only be so lucky," concluded Blaise, as the others also nodded in agreement before the train went to a stop. "I've got to go, Dad really doesn't like sticking around in public all too long because he's afraid that someone might do him in. Have a nice summer, everyone and I wouldn't advise sending anything, Dad's petrified of the owl post."

"Better not send me anything either, it won't be able to find me, as I'll be on the move no doubt, as I figure my guardian has something in store for me," added Harry before they all exchanged words of farewell, but Harry had to check in for a quick meeting with his organization to clue them in on future plans, before he went toad hunting.

Dolores Umbridge was in her sitting room, life had not dealt her a favorable set of cards recently and she blamed Barone for disgracing Cornelius. She admitted that Cornelius wasn't the most able of politicians in most cases, but that was the idea. Umbridge lead a group of Ministry officials who wanted dark creatures wiped off the face of the Earth, no exceptions, and Fudge would have been the perfectly puppet to put their plans slowly into action. Their rights, werewolves especially, would slowly be taken away, provoking a more vicious majority into attacking humans. These widespread attacks would drum up public support to get rid of these filthy beasts once and for all.

Everything was going quite swimmingly, until Barone came into the picture. Quite a few who were tied to Fudge were disgraced but there were many who managed to backtrack their support quickly enough. Dolores was one of the few who lost a lot of political stature with the new regime, as the Ministry was always eager to cover up their tracks when they were grilled by the press. So, Umbridge came up with a dangerous and quite unpredictable plan, freeing three convicts from Azkaban with the express purpose of putting Barone in his place. The plan failed and Umbridge stopped while she was ahead. Unless, an opportunity presented itself, Umbridge just had to keep quiet. It would be foolish to do anything, as so far, she had not been connected to the break out just yet.

"Who is it?" demanded Umbridge to a knock on her door.

“Magical girl scouts, cookies for sale,” said a high pitched girly voice from outside the door.

“Don’t want any,” said Umbridge curtly.

“It’s for a good cause, it raises proceeds to fund the league to stamp out werewolves,” added the voice from outside the door and Umbridge sprang up with glee, at the sound of that. She didn’t even like cookies, but an organization with aims like that was something that she was extremely fond of.

As she opened the door, she found six guns in her chest and her wand knocked out of her hand, as she came face to face with Barone.

“What is the meaning of this?” demanded Umbridge but the mobsters violently pushed Umbridge backwards, before they forced her down into a chair and Barone walked in, narrowing his eyes at Umbridge.

“It’s been a long time, Umbridge, could have been much longer, but what are you going to do,” replied Barone. “So, released any prisoners from Azkaban lately?”

“What are you talking about?” inquired Umbridge but that earned her a shop tap on the head with the pimp cane.

“Listen to me, Umbridge, I know you released those three from Azkaban,” remarked Barone, as Umbridge was all too aware that the Muggle weapons were inches away from her face and her wand was out of reach.

“Well, then turn me into the Ministry of Magic, I’ll just be out by tomorrow,” challenged Umbridge but Barone just smirked.

“I warned you not to test me Umbridge and by breaking those three out of Azkaban, putting countless lives in danger I might add, for the simple fact you didn’t get a job because I exposed Fudge to the world, you tested me,” said Barone as he raised a gun to Umbridge’s head. “Give me one reason why I shouldn’t blow your face off, I daresay it might improve your looks even.”

“The Ministry will know you did it, you won’t get away with this,” argued Umbridge. “I suggest you let me go or I’ll...”

“Please Umbridge, you couldn’t beat me if I had one hand tied behind my back and the other hand helping you,” interrupted Barone in a bored voice. “If I just say the word, I could have my men eradicate you right now and believe me, I wouldn’t shed a tear. However, I have a much better idea for you Umbridge.”

Barone waved his wand and a small pop was heard, before Umbridge was transfigured into a real life toad. She gave a croak and attempted to hop away, but Barone prevented the toad’s escape, before he turned to his men.

“Now that loose end is tied up, let’s take the Portkey and prepare to move onto the next phase of the plan,” ordered Barone, as Umbridge the toad attempted to make a desperate lunge for escape, with Barone stopped as he calmly removed the Portkey. The mobsters crowded and seconds later, they reappeared at headquarters, before they moved on to other activities until they were summoned again.

Once they were gone, Barone set Umbridge the toad down on the floor, both his wand and a gun trained on the toad.

“Vinny, dinner!” called Barone in a wicked voice and Vinny the snake slithered into focus, staring down the toad with hungry eyes.

“Tonight’s prey looks delicious,” hissed Vinny with relish as the toad gave one feeble croak as Vinny stalked it before there was nothing but silence.

Meanwhile in his fortress, a large stone structure shaped like the dark mark, located in the middle of a remote swamp, Lord Voldemort sat in a dark, depressing room in his fortress, enjoying the silence. His plans for the world would take some time to completely put into play, but he was a patient man. He had spent a decade in various less than acceptable forms and because of his immortality; time was a luxury that the Dark Lord had an abundance of.

“Enter,” hissed Voldemort as his spells outside the door signaled an approaching desk and one of his Death Eaters entered the room, before he kneeled before his lord. “To your feet, Fluxom.”

“My lord, I come to inform you of a message that was printed in today’s Daily Prophet,” said Fluxom quickly as he extended his hand out with the copy of the paper to Lord Voldemort. “Perhaps if you would...”

Voldemort calmly took the paper, surveying it with an unconcerned look on his face.

“Barone says he has purchased time of the Wizing Wireless for this evening and will address the entire Wizing World, he insists I should tune in especially,” muttered Voldemort to himself and he rose to his feet, to make preparations to listen to Barone’s broadcast at the appointed time.

At approximately a quarter till nine in the evening, all channels broadcasted on the Wizing Wireless were cut off abruptly.

“This broadcast has been interrupted by a special announcement paid for by the mafia directed towards Lord Voldemort and any other upstart dark wizards who might want to make a name for themselves at the expense of Harry Potter,” announced a voice over the wireless before it was cut in.

“Good evening, children, you know who I am,” said Barone over the radio. “Now recently, you may have heard the rumors that Lord Voldemort has returned. Voldemort or as I will now call him, because I refuse to acknowledge a falsely made title, Riddle, staged an elaborate scheme to abduct the heir to a very prestigious mafia empire and put his life in jeopardy. Yes, Riddle, that was in fact Harry and not some elaborate scheme on my part. You were lucky he survived too weren’t you, or you’d be kissing that immortality good bye, huh Riddle.”

Voldemort just calmly sat there as laughter echoed from the wireless.

“Still, there is an old saying that if you send one of ours to the hospital will send one of yours to the morgue, but I don’t personally believe

that saying,” continued Barone. “My belief is that if you even lay one hand on one of us, I’ll put all of yours six feet under and laugh in your face about it, as I dance over their graves. You might be wondering, exactly how do I plan to eliminate every single Death Eater? Well, I’m not going to explain my plan in great detail to give my enemies a chance to beat me. I mean, who do you think I am, Voldemort?”

Barone laughed again, in a sinister tone and Voldemort privately wondered if this mobster had a death wish as he was sure digging his grave under the wireless right about now.

“As for you Riddle, I know you want one more round with Harry to prove yourself to be the superior wizard, in a more public forum, to really hammer home your dominance, but guess what, life is a bitch and then you die,” said Barone. “And believe me Riddle, you will die a messy death and any magical assassins listening over my broadcast might find this next piece of information of interest. Effective immediately, a contract is going out on Tom Marvolo Riddle, also Lord Voldemort also known as He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named also known You-Know-Who also the Dark Lord, soon to be known as R.I.P. So anyone who wants to make a quick few galleons or in fact one million of them, I want the Dark Lord’s head. I’m not fussed about whether or not the body is attached, as long as the head is intact so I can place it as a trophy over the fireplace in my office. Someone take the god damned gold, I want Riddle gone.”

Voldemort wondered what Barone was playing at, surely no witch or wizard would go after the Dark Lord just to make some gold.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, Riddle, time is ticking away, and your end will come, there were those who would try and do you in for free if they got the chance and they have more than a chance, with one million galleons and there might be a few within your own Inner Circle who might stab you in the back. But don’t worry Riddle, if we do ever meet, you don’t have to worry about me stabbing you in the back like a coward because I’ll shoot you right between the eyes like a man,” concluded Barone, before he paused briefly. “One final thought before you resume your regularly scheduled programming and this is directed at Riddle. It’s almost nine o’clock, do you know where your minions are?”

The minute Barone's voice went dead, Voldemort prepared to call a meeting of his Death Eaters but a loud thud echoed from the next room and Voldemort turned around, to see a figure dressed in full Death Eater garb standing outside the door, who quickly fire a set of extremely lethal looking spells at Voldemort. Voldemort naturally deflected every one of them with ease, before he knocked his soon to be dead opponent backwards. The Dark Lord slashed his wand and the mask broke up to reveal the face of Goyle.

"Goyle?" thundered Voldemort in surprise. "How dare you attempt to attack Lord Voldemort!"

"My lord, please, I came home several years ago, spelling of troll love, thanks to that blasted bounty hunter and my wife left me, I'm nothing without her," begged Goyle. "Please, master, be a good chap, by jove, I'm just only trying to earn some money to buy her things to win her back. Come on, that's a good fellow, come on old chap, have some mercy, it's not like I'm trying to betray you, I just need the money, nothing personal old bean."

"Avada Kedavra," said Voldemort softly and a jet of green light flew out, impacting Goyle right in the chest, dropping him to the ground and another echo, as Voldemort was backed off by a large ball of fire, as a cloaked individual had attempted to cash in on the contract that Barone had put on Voldemort's head. A loud crack as Voldemort's arm was broken, but naturally it healed within seconds, because of the properties of his new body.

The assassin was relentless and sent a large jet of acid at Voldemort. Voldemort repelled it backwards and turned to face the assassin, who dropped a small parcel on the ground. A loud bang and smoke filled the air, as a couple of jets of solid black light shot right at Voldemort, before the assassin had fled, no doubt ready to return with a better strategy.

Before the smoke cleared, another assassin, also dressed in full Death Eater garb and looking rather short in stature arrived in front of Voldemort and shot a couple of organ explosion hexes, and blasted several razor sharp spikes at Voldemort. The attack caught the Dark Lord off guard, as he was still off balance from the second assassin.

Voldemort casually slashed his wand towards the attacker and the attacker staggered to the ground, but he quickly blasted a hole through the wall, before escaping into the swamp and disappeared.

Voldemort sent a large silver snake out of his wand to summon his Death Eaters for a meeting, along with someone to fix that wall the attacker.

Back at one of his many bases of operation, Harry pulled off the Death Eater mask and removed the hood, no doubt he put Voldemort on the edge with that last attack. Little did Voldemort know that Harry knew exactly where he was and he had been doing his broadcast from the same swamp where Voldemort was located, but he did have several bodyguards hidden in strategic location just in case his mission went awry.

"I heard your little broadcast on the wireless Harry," remarked Remus calmly, as he stepped out of the room. "A million galleons to the person who kills Voldemort?"

"Yes I might be overpricing him but a couple of days ago, I had his location leaked to several places where magical assassins have been known to hang out, so there will be no shortage of people who would want to take a crack at Riddle," responded Harry, who was fully aware that a direct fight against Voldemort would be an idiotic move after last time, so he was going to keep Voldemort busy with this contract until Harry felt he was ready.

"What if he finds out and decides to move?" questioned Remus.

"Riddle's ego won't allow him to, he'll consider that admitting defeat," argued Harry. "Granted, I'm not expecting anyone to come remotely close to anyone to offing Riddle, but the million galleons is set back and damned if I'll complain if someone succeeds. I'll most likely have to go up against Voldemort once again, but until I can come up with a way to defeat him, I can only stall him."

Indeed, Harry was working with Flamel, as his centuries of experience might prove useful, along with consulting a few other of the most brilliant minds in the Wizarding World. While Voldemort's

body was stronger than ever before, nothing was invulnerable and Harry vowed to work hard to find Voldemort's Achilles heel.

"And dare I ask, where did you get the Death Eater Costume?" questioned Remus.

"They sell them in a clothing store at Diagon Alley," replied Harry casually. "I figure if some Ministry stooge comes around, they pass them off as Halloween costumes but never mind that as the show is really about to begin."

In the worst part of Knockturn Alley, a group of four Death Eaters had concluded their purchases of several questionable relics, which would serve the mysterious plans of the Dark Lord well. It cost a fair amount of gold, but no price was too much in serving their master. They crowded around, before the leader of the group tapped the illegal Portkey with his wand.

They only had two seconds to realize that the Portkey had been switched with a magically enhanced bomb rigged to explode the second a wand tapped it. Unfortunately, none of the Death Eaters were quick witted to realize this and could not put up a shield. A loud explosion went off, blowing the four Death Eaters to bits and turning over half of Knockturn Alley into debris, absolutely obliterating several of the shops.

Around that time, Lord Voldemort had a meeting of all of his Inner Circle members at his swamp fortress. He stood, with his back to a wall, as he turned to address them.

"As you may have heard if you had listened to the Wizarding Wireless earlier today, Barone, obviously incensed that I had figured out that his scheme that he had sent a decoy instead of Harry Potter despite the lies he had spread to the contrary, had placed a sizeable sum of gold on my head, upwards to one million galleons," responded Voldemort. "There has already been a handful of attempts on my life and there may be several more, as the world is chalked full of fools and to my Death Eaters, there had already been two attempts on my life this evening from my own circle. The second managed to just barely get away with his life, but the first was Goyle. Goyle's attempt on my life failed and I offer him as an example of anyone in this room

who attempts to make a name for themselves by attempting to collect the gold that Barone offered for my head. Is that clear?”

The Death Eaters nodded in agreement, but a lower ranking Death Eater burst through the door, with a frantic expression on his face, before he knelt down before Voldemort.

“To your feet,” ordered Voldemort calmly.

“My Lord, Knockturn Alley has been destroyed and the four you had sent, had not returned!” explained the frantic Death Eater and Voldemort stood calmly, without an expression on his face. Today, he had sent four Death Eaters to retrieve a trio of highly dangerous and rare artifacts that were being kept at Borgin and Burkes, the owner of the shop most likely didn’t know their true power or value. In essence, when joined together, Voldemort could use them to make all magical creatures his completely obedient servants and that was essential to his plans.

“Bella, take a team to Knockturn Alley, make sure the artifacts aren’t damaged in any way,” ordered Voldemort.

“Anything you say, my Lord!” cheered Bellatrix in an absolute bubbly voice, as a few Inner Circle Members joined the insane dark witch, before they disappeared to Knockturn Alley.

After about thirty minutes of silence, the Death Eaters reappeared, all with apprehensive looks on their faces.

“My Lord, have mercy, we attempted to recover the artifacts but they weren’t in Knockturn Alley,” reported Bellatrix in a scared voice. “I don’t know what happened, the Ministry might have gotten there first or they were destroyed in the explosion.”

“This is a minor inconvenience,” said Voldemort dismissively, but deep down he was quite angered about the loss of priceless artifacts and had a pretty good idea on who was responsible for the destruction of Knockturn Alley. “I must regroup our and restructure our plans, I will summon you once I require you for our next move.”

One by one, the Death Eaters disappeared as Voldemort disappeared into the deepest, darkest, recesses of his fortress to plot.

Walden MacNair, evil executioner extraordinaire, returned from the Death Eater meeting, insulted that anyone would dare put gold on the head of his beloved master, the Dark Lord. Sure the Dark Lord could get really cranky at times and randomly use the Cruciatus Curse on people, but he was not all that bad of a guy. Plus, he offered decent medical coverage, which was something that the Ministry sure did not do.

MacNair was caught off guard as a loud rumbling echoed outside of his home. As the rumbling grew louder, MacNair could think of only two things. Either it was an earthquake or those punk Muggle teenagers next door were blaring their music. MacNair stepped forward to investigate but much to his absolute shock, a herd of rhinoceroses shattered his wall. He threateningly pointed his wand, but that did not do MacNair much good at all. Blood splattered onto his wall as a horn impaled right into his stomach. The rhinoceroses continued their rampage, trampling to through the neighborhood, with corpse of MacNair stuck to one of their horns, before they went right into a large wall of white light, where they vanished as suddenly as they appeared from the neighborhood.

The next morning, another Death Eater, named Ellison, had been going through some rough times. He had been sacked from his job at the Ministry due to some recent cutbacks and his wife had left him for another woman. The only hope he had in life was to earn a dark mark and finally be allowed to join the Dark Lord's Inner Circle. Until then, he did the only thing he felt was logical and retreated right into the bottle of firewhiskey.

In fact, Ellison was so hung over from the previous evening, that it took him several minutes to realize that he was not in his house, but in fact, he was in an abandoned saw mill, strapped to a conveyor belt and moving directly towards a rotating buzzsaw, without a wand to disable the machinery. The Death Eater attempted to scream for help but no sound came out, including the screams of his own pain as the buzz saw cut right into the top of his head. Seconds later, Ellison was two perfectly symmetrical halves, neither of them living.

Around this time, Seth Jugson, one of the Death Eaters inadvertently busted out of Azkaban when Sirius Black was broken out prepared to make some breakfast. Being on the run didn't offer him many luxuries and he lived in an abandoned shack that was right next to a train station. As he sat down, a large barrage of Muggle bullets shattered the windows. Jugson was marginally smarter than most of his fellow Death Eaters, so he ducked under the table, putting a shield up. As glass shattered around Jugson, he attempted to apparate out but enchantments had been placed his rundown shack to prevent such a means of escape. As a backup plan, he blasted the door open before he rushed outside as quickly as he could manage. Jugson reached approximately five feet before he was shot right in the heel. The Death Eater recoiled in agony as he was hoisted up into the air, his wand flying quite a distance and thick cords wrapped around him, binding him around the train tracks. Jugson attempted to pull himself free but much like ninety five percent of the Wizarding World, he was powerless without his wand.

His situation went from bad to worse when the sound of an approaching train was heard and Jugson looked up in horror as a train barreled down the tracks right towards him. There was nothing he could do to brace himself for the impact, as the train rolled right over him. Several loud crunches and the train passed, with Jugson's decapitated head rolling off the track. The train skidded to a stop, as Barone stuck his head out the window, wearing a conductor's cap, with a triumphant look on his face, as he raised the pimp cane high into the air in victory, before giving an approving look to the group of his mobsters that had flushed Jugson out of his home, before he met his final doom.

In the afternoon, Yaxley sank down in his chair, absolutely exhausted from a hard day's work at the Ministry of Magic. In between his job at the Ministry, had still attempted to vainly collect information about Barone for the Dark Lord. There was no doubt in Yaxley's mind that the Dark Lord would want to know more about the mysterious mobster, ever since the contract was placed on the Dark Lord's head. His efforts had been in vain, but Yaxley vowed not to rest until he found out about Barone. There seemed to be an interesting paper trail that covered his activities and Yaxley was now beginning to unravel it slightly.

At that moment, Yaxley was startled as his door blown open. The Death Eater sprang to his feet with cat like reflexes and sent a barrage of spells at him, but a large net burst from nowhere, wrapping up Yaxley. Yaxley struggled and tried to cut himself free, but one of the mobsters calmly snatched the wand from the trapped Yaxley's hand before it was tossed to the ground, as Barone walked into the picture, with a gun in one hand and a wand in the other.

"Yaxley, Yaxley, Yaxley, don't think I've forgotten about you," remarked Barone calmly. "Putting an eleven year old in danger, who just happens to be my responsibility, not exactly a great way to get on my good side. Also, you've been quite the busy body, haven't you? Been snooping around, trying to figure me out, you are coming dangerously close to knowing too much."

"Barone, you can't get away with this, the Dark Lord..." stated Yaxley but Barone cut in.

"SHADDUP!" snapped Barone, as he smacked Yaxley with the pimp cane. "Save your rhetoric about the Dark Lord making me pay for someone who might actually give a damn. Riddle has his hands full with warding off about a dozen or so attempts on his life a day. You'd be surprised how many people would be willing to risk their necks against Riddle for one million galleons."

Two of Barone's men hoisted the contained Yaxley up, before they touched a Portkey, reappearing seconds later at an abandoned warehouse.

"Wait, you've just brought me to an abandoned Muggle warehouse to shoot me with those guns or whatever those rubbish things that Muggles have created to replace wands," mocked Yaxley.

"Don't be an idiot, we haven't brought you to a warehouse to just shoot you to death," replied Barone before he paused. "We brought you to a warehouse to shoot you to death and dump your corpse into a vat of acid."

The mobsters shared a brief laugh at their boss's twisted sense of humor.

“Gentlemen, start your machine guns,” prompted Barone and a short time later, Yaxley was filled full of bullets. Calmly, Barone levitated the bullet ridden corpse into the air, before he dropped it into a vat of acid. “That will be all today gentlemen, having a good evening and give the best to your family. A couple more Death Eaters need to be put in their place but that can wait until tomorrow.”

Without another word, the mobsters took the Portkey back to headquarters, before calling it an evening.

In the early part of the morning the following day, Rodolphus Lestranger opened his eyes. Bellatrix was not in the bedroom, which was always a good sign but rather eight Muggle firearms and one wand were on him.

“Good evening Roddy, this is your wakeup call,” declared Barone as the mobsters stood beside him but Barone held it up in the air, which caused Rodolphus’s eyes to widen in horror.

“Give me my wand you stupid Mudblood or...” stated Rodolphus in what he perceived to be a threatening voice but he found himself magically yanked into bed, before he was thrown into the hallway. Several more bursts of magic blasted Rodolphus down the hallway of his home. One final blast sent him down to the main level of the Lestranger estate and a second blast of magic sent him down another flight of stairs into the basement.

When the cobwebs were cleared, Rodolphus was chained the floor of his own basement as he watched a quartet of mobsters haul a giant magnifying down the stairs, and place it directly over Barone.

“I pride myself in the killing my enemies in the most insane and innovative ways possible, with a few considerations for humiliation thrown in when applicable” remarked Barone calmly. “I mean, anyone could gun someone down or strike them with a Killing Curse. Rather uninspiring, don’t you think, Roddy?”

Rodolphus just stared at Barone with utter contempt and hatred in his eyes.

“Not much of a talker, I see, well it really doesn’t matter does it,” continued Barone. “Ever take a magnifying glass and fry ants when you were young?”

“That sounds something that might be more up Bella’s street,” muttered Rodolphus, more to himself than Barone.

“Now, I was up late at night, thinking, what if I got a bigger magnifying glass and used it on Death Eaters, wouldn’t that be keen?” asked Barone doing an imitation of an over excited boy scout as he leapt up and down. “No, most likely not, but I’m going to do it anyway. After all, I must always burn my opponents before the end.”

Barone waved his wand, causing the magnifying glass to glow orange before Rodolphus screamed as he spontaneously combusted underneath the magnifying glass.

“Death Eaters roasting on an open fire!” sang Barone as he watched Rodolphus burn. “Being killed dead by fire!”

Casually, as if this was any every day occurrence, Barone calmly removed a bag of marshmallows from his pocket before placing several of them on Rodolphus’s wand. Coolly, Barone held the marshmallows over Rodolphus’s body as the magnifying glass concluded burning the Death Eater to a crisp.

“Mmm, Death Eater roasted marshmallows, the newest food craze,” voiced Barone in between bites as he also banished the ashes of Rodolphus. “Want a taste?”

The mobsters shook their heads but Barone just shrugged his shoulders. After all, that just left more for him, which he was perfectly pleased with.

Before Barone departed, he left his calling card, shooting into the air a dark mark being shot by a construct of a machine gun. Blood appeared to have splattered from the dark mark as it was shot in mid air.

Minister Weaver was at the Ministry, in a rather towering mood. Several Ministry employees had vanished while a few others that had

vanished had been confirmed dead. It was rather interesting that most, if not all of them were individuals who had been accused of being Death Eaters but were acquitted due to claiming they had been under the Imperius Curse.

“Minister, we’ve found MacNair or what’s left of him,” informed a frantic looking aide, as he entered the Minister’s office. “His remains were found in Africa.”

“Now that’s solved,” said Weaver in a weary voice. “Now we’ve got to find out what in the hell happened to Umbridge, she just vanished without a trace.”

“I bet Barone was somehow behind this, Minister,” remarked the aide.

“Until we have any proof, we cannot make groundless accusations, so until we have concrete evidence that directly ties Barone to the mysterious deaths, then the guy’s clean,” said the Minister. “Yes, that modified dark mark does look suspicious, but it could just as easily be someone who has a vendetta against him, we must consider anything and who let you in here, Skeeter.”

Indeed, Rita Skeeter was standing in the doorway of Weaver’s office.

“Good morning Minister, I’d like to ask you a few questions about recent events, all these mysterious deaths and disappearances,” remarked Rita. “True, a few allegedly respected Ministry officials have met their end, but there have been many Death Eaters who have been broken out of Azkaban that have been killed as well. I would like a word about that.”

“Most likely some sort of self appointed magical vigilante,” offered Weaver. “I’d like to point out that the Ministry does not approve acts outside the scope of the law and it is the duty of the Ministry Aurors to bring in fugitives, not any wizard off the street. While our mysterious friend no doubt has the best intentions in mind, he is breaking the law.”

“Ah, but that’s the Ministry stance on the issue, but what do you think, Minister?” asked Rita.

“As long as I’m Minister, what I think is irrelevant, Skeeter,” remarked Weaver in a testy voice, as a part of him was grateful that whomever was behind this was cutting down on the workload, but as the Minister of Magic, he had sworn to uphold the laws of the Ministry and if he had concrete proof on who did this, he would be forced to declare them a fugitive. Not that he was going out of his way to find out who was eliminating Death Eaters and once suspected Death Eaters, as the return of Voldemort and a few mysterious attacks on Muggle villages in recent days were of a greater concern to the security of the world.

“Fair enough Minister, thank you for your time, I’m sure our readers will be extremely interested to hear what the Ministry’s opinion are on this issue,” answered Rita.

“Skeeter, if you twist even one word...” stated Weaver.

“Don’t worry, the boss wants the absolute truth and let’s face it, when dealing with the Ministry, the truth can be more damaging than any sensationalism,” admitted Rita. “Good day to you Minister.”

The summer passed with many more mysterious deaths and disappearances that put the entire Wizarding World on edge. In between several skilled assassins who had come to collect on the one million galleons, some coming closer than others, Voldemort staged a few carefully planned attacks, including a raid on Azkaban. Voldemort not only broke out all of the Death Eaters that were left inside the prison, but it was also rumored that he offered several other prisoners a chance to escape, in exchange for joining him. At least half of the prisoners who were not Death Eaters jumped on the opportunity to join Voldemort.

The next Hogwarts school year began just days after this desperate Voldemort move where he busted several Death Eaters and other fugitives out of Azkaban, to replace the followers that had been knocked out by Barone. Outside of King’s Cross, the Weasleys were making their way to the station, Percy in the front, adjusting his prefect badge.

“So, I’m finally going to meet him,” whispered Ginny in an excited voice to Ron. “I’m so jealous, you already know him.”

“Yes, Harry and I are best mates,” said Ron proudly. “Sure we don’t talk that much, because he’s a Ravenclaw so I suppose it’s a rule in that house that you have to spend nearly all of your free time in the library or something but we get along alright.”

Fred and George stopped as they looked at their two youngest siblings with amusement.

“Should we tell Ron that Harry can barely stand him because he’s a closed minded git?” asked George in a lowered tone of voice.

“Nah,” said Fred.

“Should we tell Ginny that she might score points with Harry by acting like an over excited fan girl?” questioned George.

“Nah,” replied Fred a second time.

“Should we laugh when they finally wise up and realize that they’ve not endeared themselves to Harry, a long time after the rest of the world has?” inquired George.

“Oh yes,” replied Fred.

“What are you two up to?” demanded Molly.

“Us, up to anything,” said George in a mock wounded voice.

“Mum, how could you say we would be up to something?” asked Fred.

“Just behave and make sure your sister doesn’t embarrass herself too much in front of Harry,” replied Molly. “That poor boy needs someone who will make sure he doesn’t stray down the wrong path, it’s a shame that rotten mobster spread those lies about Dumbledore, but we can still help him, even though Dumbledore can’t now.”

Fred and George just nodded to patronize their mother, wondering exactly how much of their little sister’s crush was encouraged by their mother before they boarded the train for their trip to Hogwarts.

On the train, Harry, Hermione, Blaise, Neville, Fred, and George had found a compartment to the back of the train, removed from nearly everything else.

"Summer was excellent, a bit quiet if anything, unless of course you listened to the news," said Blaise.

"You mean all those Death Eaters who mysteriously dropped dead," remarked George.

"Not to mention all those once supposed Death Eaters who suddenly snapped out of the Imperius Curse when they were accused, that also dropped dead," said Fred.

"Yes, that, I normally don't follow the news, but that did manage to catch my eye," replied Blaise. "Dad seemed a bit pleased, but I think that's more likely because it seems that Barone's more occupied with You-Know-Who than him, so he might see it as a chance for him to regain some ground."

"Ah yes, your infamous guardian, Harry," remarked George.

"You wouldn't have to know if he had anything to do about this, would you?" asked Fred.

"I have no idea what you're talking about," replied Harry in a falsely innocent voice that caused Hermione to casually place her hand over her mouth to stifle a smile. "Still, Death Eaters dropping dead can't be all that bad, can it?"

"No, the Ministry says they are going to do something, according to Gran, but she said she'll believe it when she sees it," inputted Neville.

"The Ministry couldn't catch anything if they stationed their headquarters in a village suffering from a plague," said Blaise which caused the others to laugh.

"Still even if Barone's methods seem a bit extreme and slightly insane," remarked Hermione slowly, as she glanced sideways to Harry. "It's unfortunate and necessary."

They all nodded in agreement, as they awaited the sweet cart. Harry had big plans to get loaded up on sugar for his own amusement but as the door opened, with two individuals and Harry's face was fixed, into a neutral expression, that hid any emotion on his face once and for all. There were many things that Harry felt he could handle, many individuals that Harry could see, but he was not ready for this.

"Are you sure that there isn't any other place, Luna?" asked Ginny in a hushed voice, as she blushed slightly.

"Yes, there isn't, this is the only compartment that has room," replied Luna in a calm voice.

"Yes, but oh Merlin, he's in here, I'm not ready, what if I make a fool of myself?" asked Ginny.

"If you do, then that's what will happen," answered Luna in a firm voice. "Ginny, you've never met him in your life, now is a good time to form an own opinion on Harry Potter. If you two don't mix, better to know now, then waste your life going on false hope."

"Of course we're get along," remarked Ginny as she was appalled that Luna was suggesting anything to the contrary as Luna lead them inside, as Ginny looked at the floor, embarrassed about being in the same room with him and the fact that he was so impossibly cute did not help matters any, but that was too be expected. If Harry Potter was ugly, that would be a crime to the Wizarding World.

"May we sit here, everywhere else is full?" asked Luna politely.

"Of course, you may," replied Hermione in a kind voice. "I'm Hermione Granger by the way."

"Pleased to meet you, I'm Luna Lovegood and this is my friend, Ginny Weasley," remarked Luna, who took pity on Ginny who seemed too tongue tied to say anything in the presence of Harry Potter, despite never saying two words to him.

"Blaise Zabini," introduced Blaise.

"Neville Longbottom," said Neville politely.

"Now, Luna, we're hurt, you should know who we are," replied George.

"Yes, considering the fact we dropped water balloons filled with chocolate syrup in yours and Ginny's hair when you were both seven," added Fred.

"Although to be fair, we were aiming for Percy," concluded George.

"Yes, he snitched on us to Mum for not degnoming the garden properly," added Fred.

"Yes, I remember that, it was quite amusing, even if it did take several hours to get my hair clean," remarked Luna casually as she turned to Harry, almost expecting him to expect them to know who he was.

"Pleased to meet you Luna, I'm Harry Potter," said Harry calmly, looking Luna right in the eyes, deciding to ignore Ginny for the sake of not getting angry today. "You wouldn't have to be related to the editor of the Quibbler, Xenophilius Lovegood, would you?"

"Yes, that's my Dad, also the seven time winner of the Witch Weekly's 'First Name Most Likely to Be Misspelled on a Restraining Order' award," remarked Luna which caused Harry to laugh, he had hoped she would bring this point up. As far as Harry was concerned, that award was more prestigious then the bullshit most charming smile award that Lockhart had won. "Why, are you a fan, Harry?"

"Of course I am, anyone who isn't is really missing out," said Harry and he was telling the truth, he was highly amused by the Quibbler each and every month. "I know it's panned as not being a serious publication by the Wizarding World, but let's be honest, most of them aren't very opened minded. There is so much in there that's the truth to."

"Yes, I agree, people should be open minded and while some of Dad's information can be a bit out there, when he does stumble upon the truth and when he has, we've gotten a few death threats," remarked Luna casually, as if this was an everyday thing and for Harry, it might have been, but Harry was a bit concerned about this happening to his friend and her family. "Mum really doesn't like the

way Dad sometimes pokes fun at the wrong people, but it gives him a hobby and judging by our readership, there are a lot of people who are fans, so he must be doing something right."

"He is, in fact if your Dad tries to change the way he writes the Quibbler, I might have to stop reading it," joked Harry, which caused Luna to laugh.

"I really don't think there's a danger in that, Harry," answered Luna with a smile, before she glanced a look over at Ginny, who continued to stare at Harry, looking transfixed. "So tell me about you Harry?"

"Well the first five years in my life I was forced against my will to live with the Dursleys, the best argument to stamping out Muggles for pureblood supremacists, before I was rescued by the mob, as I found out that I was an heir to a vast mafia empire," explained Harry. "Until I ready, an old retired mob boss, named Allan Michael Barone, who just happened to be a wizard, was hired to both help run the operations and get me prepared. Dumbledore didn't take too kindly to this but in court, he was exposed. Until I went to Hogwarts, my life was rather quiet, I went to a Muggle school with Hermione and Blaise here, and needless to say, we left our mark. Our first teacher is still in the asylum from what happened and at Hogwarts, I worked hard, getting sorted into Ravenclaw, and then the year was rather quiet. Unless you count that minor detail of Voldemort attempting to kill me."

"Yes, that would put a damper on a good year," agreed Luna. "Still, it just proves you're more than just a famous name considering you got yourself in one piece. As long as you don't start believing in the hype that others give you, I think you'll make it out okay Harry. From what I've learned since I've met you, it seems you have a good head on your shoulders."

"Thank you Luna," said Harry. "Those people who give me that hype as some great savior have never really met me, so their opinion counts for very little as far as I'm concerned. It just frustrates me that people who have never really gotten to know me all that well think they know I am."

Ginny's heart fluttered as Harry Potter had just looked at her. She disregarded the part that Harry's eyes were slightly narrowed in a bit

if distaste when he did. It was too good to be true, Harry had to have fancied her, even if he didn't know it yet.

"Yes, I can see how that would be rather frustrating," repeated Luna as she nudged Ginny but Ginny seemed to not have noticed.

"So what houses do you think you'll be in?" asked Hermione.

"I think it'd be interesting to see where I'm placed, Mum was in Gryffindor and Dad was in Ravenclaw," remarked Luna candidly. "I'm leaning towards Ravenclaw, it's just Gryffindors seem a little impulsive at times, no offense."

"None taken," said Neville as Fred and George also nodded, as they agreed that sometimes they acted before they talked.

"I'd be in Gryffindor, everyone else but Ron was, after all," said Ginny in a quiet voice, even though she hoped she was in Ravenclaw so she could be with her Harry. After all, her mother said they were destined to be together and she had dreamed of marrying Harry ever since she was four.

At that moment, the lady who wheeled the trolley full of sweets inside entered the compartment.

"Anything off the trolley?" asked the snack lady and at that moment, Harry and Luna both sprang up, reaching for the remaining chocolate frogs on the cart at the same time.

"Oh, sorry Harry, but I really like chocolate," said Luna, wishing she had shown a bit more restraint in front of Harry.

"Oh, don't mention it, I do to," replied Harry.

"How about we take all the chocolate and split the cost?" suggested Luna.

"No need Luna, I can pay for it all, no need to spend your money," replied Harry.

“Harry, what kind of friend would I be if I didn’t help you pay for this?” asked Luna firmly as she turned to the snack lady. “How much for rest of the chocolate on the cart?”

“That would be thirty nine galleons, five sickles, and three knuts,” replied the snack lady, and Luna and Harry, pooled together forty galleons each.

“Keep the change,” said Harry, as Luna nodded in agreement, as they carried arms of chocolate frogs back into the compartment. “Do any of you want anything?”

Fred and George shook their heads no, that had already accepted enough from Harry. Neville had already eaten a large breakfast and was saving himself for the feast. Hermione didn’t eat all that many sweets and Blaise reached forward, helping herself to a few chocolate frogs. Ginny just continued to stare transfixed at Harry, unaware that he had said anything.

“I always thought the cards were rather interesting,” replied Luna. “Dad doesn’t like them all that much, though?”

“Really, why?” asked Blaise curiously, as she took a bite out of the chocolate frog.

“Well, he thinks they are a part of a vast right wing conspiracy by the Ministry of Magic to brainwash people into following them without question,” explained Luna.

“It’s a good thing your Dad caught on about that Luna, the Ministry was being rather diabolical in their schemes and the people need to know the truth,” said Harry seriously.

“That does sound a little far fetched,” remarked Hermione.

“So does an entire hidden world of Magical people, yet here we are,” countered Harry casually.

“Not to mention a one year old knocking the most powerful dark lord of all time out of his body,” added Blaise but a loud thump was heard outside the door. “What in the bloody hell was that?”

"Please don't be Death Eaters attacking the train, please don't be Death Eaters attacking the train, please don't be Death Eaters attacking the train," muttered Harry under his breath but something much worse than Death Eaters came flying into the room.

"Someone get this psychotic dwarf away from me!" yelled Ron in a petrified voice, as he hid behind Ginny and seconds later the infamous Killer Schwartz entered the room, a crossbow in hand.

"G'day mates, I'm Killer Schwartz but my friends call me Killer Schwartz and my enemies call me, Killer Schwartz," announced the bounty hunter. "I'm here because I received intelligence that Lord Voldemort is here on this very train."

"Where?" asked Neville who sounded a bit intimidated.

"Right there," yelled Killer Schwartz as he dragged Ron out from behind his sister. "Thought you could pull one on me, Voldemort, but I will have that one million galleon bounty when I remove your head and present it to Barone. I will be able to blooming retire, mate."

"Killer Schwartz!" said Luna in a firm voice. "Put him down and listen to me for a minute.

"Ah, Miss Lovegood, I hope your father is doing quite well," remarked Killer Schwarz.

"You know this guy," muttered Harry.

"Of course, Daddy wrote an article on bounty hunting midgets with mullets last year and interviewed Killer Schwartz, he really is quite skilled at playing the piano," replied Luna calmly.

"Oh yeah, I remember now," said Harry. "Mr. Schwartz..."

"Nonsense mate, no need to be formal, you may call me Killer Schwartz, because that's what my friends call me, Killer Schwartz," prompted Killer Schwartz.

"Anyway, I'm afraid that's not Voldemort," said Harry.

"No, he's just our brother," supplied George.

"Doubt he could take over the world any time soon," said Fred.

"Foiled again, but mark my words, that bounty will be mine," remarked Killer Schwartz as he walked off the hunt down, as it was evident that the train

As Luna and Ginny made their way to a boat, Ginny turned to Luna with a calculating smirk on her face.

"I told you we would get along great," said Ginny. "Did you see the way Harry looked at me?"

"No," replied Luna calmly. "If you bothered to listen to him, he said he doesn't like people who judge him before they know him. The fact you looked at him like a star struck fan girl the entire time didn't help your cause any."

"Luna, I like you, but I know Harry likes me, he just has to, we were meant to be together," protested Ginny stubbornly.

"I suspect there are plenty others who might say they were meant to be with Harry to," said Luna rationally.

"They're just being silly, only I'm meant to be with Harry, Mum agrees with me, and once Harry figures it out, you'll be admitting you're wrong," remarked Ginny, as she was quite persistent in her beliefs.

"We'll see," said Luna dismissively. "We'll see."

The sorting was just the usual, nothing important, Remus and Sirius were still the rotating Defense Against the Dark Arts teachers. Luna was sorted into Ravenclaw as expected and Ginny was sorted into Gryffindor, something that she looked rather put out, as she looked at the Ravenclaw table longingly. Harry felt a mixture of anger, with just a tiny bit of sympathy towards Ginny. As wrong as her actions were, she was getting pressured into doing so by her mother, Dumbledore, and to a lesser extent Ron. But at the same time, Ginny chose to give into the pressure. Harry knew that if the tables were turned, if Ginny was the Girl-Who-Lived and he was the over obsessive mindless fan

boy with a crush on the heroine, he would not stoop as low as attempting to put a love potion in Ginny's drink. The thing that struck him the most is that, if Harry hadn't been famous, there was a chance that he could have gotten along much better with certain people, but who would know for sure.

One thing was for sure, as Harry reflected on certain things from the past, no matter what, he would no longer be guided by his heart. He had lost too much and he couldn't bare to lose it again, if he had gotten too emotionally attached. Those thoughts were on his mind as he walked to the Ravenclaw Common Room with Hermione and at that second, Dobby popped in front of them.

"Harry Potter sir, Dobby has been set with a message, the number two target has been found," said Dobby.

"Excellent, Hermione if anyone asks, tell them that urgent business came up that only I can attend to," remarked Harry but Hermione grabbed him by the arm.

"What does Dobby mean by the number two target?" demanded Hermione.

"Bellatrix Lestrage, don't worry Hermione, this time I've got an emergency Portkey, seven of them in fact and I'll have mafia backup this time, I learned my lesson from the Snape fiasco," remarked Harry as Hermione opened her mouth. "Yes, I'll be careful, thanks for your concern."

Without another word, Harry went off, to change from mild mannered Hogwarts second year Harry Potter to ruthless mob boss, Barone.

The location of Bellatrix's home was on a cliff, overlooking a large body of water. Waves whipped down as a storm was brewing outside, as Barone turned to address his men in an undertone.

"Now, I'm going to have to go in myself, because I'd like to minimize the causalities as Bellatrix can be rather unpredictable," said Barone. "Stay in position to take her out if it looks like there is no way to defend myself."

"We've got it, just try and not get yourself maimed in there," said Antonio, who was read the riot act not too long ago by his niece, Hermione, about making sure Harry didn't take dangerous risks.

"Vinny, keep an eye out here, just in case anyone else comes in," replied Barone, as he released his snake out.

"Of course, Master," hissed Vinny as Barone entered Bellatrix's room, greeting by the insane dark witch calmly knitting.

"Well it's about time you showed up Barone, I was wondering what I'd have to do to get you and your merry mafia to attempt to kill me," said Bellatrix casually. "Club baby seals? Rip tags off of mattresses? Post nude pictures of Umbridge all over Diagon Alley?"

Barone recoiled in horror at the last idea by Umbridge.

"If you wish to throw up before I murder you, the bathroom's right around the corner," said Bellatrix.

"No, I'll live," replied Barone.

"NOT FOR LONG!" shrieked Bellatrix as she sent a jet of yellow light which Barone dodged and it incinerated the wall completely behind him. "I'm the greatest follower of the Dark Lord, you've insulted me by not trying to kill me sooner."

"You were a bit difficult to track down," argued Barone as he blocked another spell, before he sent a spiked net at Bella who managed to slice it.

"All you had to do was follow the sounds of shrieking!" yelled Bellatrix. "CRUCIO!"

Barone levitated a chair in front of the spell, to block the impact, before he banished the chair right into Bellatrix. Pieces of wood shattered, as Bellatrix was staggered and Barone shot a noose from his wand but Bellatrix swerved around. The noose wrapped around the bed post, snapping it off.

“That could have been my head,” said Bellatrix in awe before she caught Barone in the chest with a jet of white light that caused him to be momentarily disoriented. “BUT IT WASN’T!”

Barone was flung right through the window, causing glass to shatter everywhere, but he quickly rebounded to his feet as Bellatrix made her way after him, but wall of fire burst in front of Bellatrix, stalling her and a bludgeoning spell shot right through the fire, coming close to cracking Bellatrix’s ribs.

“Please have mercy, Mister Barone, I was only just playing,” said Bellatrix in a childish voice but in an instant, she violently fired a curse at Barone who managed to block it. Had it connected, the Potter line would have been ended once and for all.

Razor sharp spikes burst out of the ground, but Bellatrix blasted them out of the way, before they impaled her in the leg.

“CRUCIO!” shouted Barone and Bellatrix was caught off guard, screaming in absolute pain, for the fifteen seconds Barone placed her under the curse. Barone let up and Bellatrix collapsed to the ground, before she burst into tears but seconds later, she laughed madly.

“That was amusing Barone, using my favorite curse on me, it’s almost as funny as a joke I heard the other day,” remarked Bellatrix. “It goes like this. A witch and a wizard walk into a bar and kill all of the Muggles inside.”

Bellatrix reared her head back and laughed for a few seconds, before she shot a spell at Barone, who blocked it. Several spells were fired, and blocked, as rain splashed down, the rock they were fighting in becoming rather slick as the battle continued. Barone was up against the edge of the cliff as he fired a curse which Bellatrix blocked. At that point, the rocks beneath Barone’s feet crumbled and he lost his balance.

Before he knew it, Barone was hanging from the edge of the cliff for his life.

And we end Chapter Twenty. The next chapter will be up sometime, eventually, with five more chapters to go.

Chapter Twenty One: Death Eaters On Ice

The predicament Barone was in was extremely amusing in a rather twisted way. Hanging over the side of a cliff, with Bellatrix cackling madly as she looked down at him with malice dancing in her eyes. The rock crumbled and Barone looked up, before he snapped his fingers and activated one of his portkeys, disappearing in mid air.

The next thing Bellatrix knew, a barrage of gunfire rained down on her, blasting her wand out of her hand and backing her off the cliff. Bullets impacted Bellatrix and she fell backwards over the cliff, laughing madly with her final breaths, proving once and for all that only Bellatrix would find her own grisly demise entertaining. Bellatrix impacted the rocks below and blood splattered in every conceivable direction. The mobsters shot at Bellatrix's body from high above, impacting her body with more bullets.

"I think she's dead," remarked Antonio calmly, as he looked down at the bullet ridden corpse of one of the top Death Eaters, having been put down by Muggle means, a humiliating and painful death to a pureblood supremacist to be certain.

"Good work, boys," answered Barone who appeared behind them. "Remind me to increase your Holiday bonus for that work. A couple dozen down and several more dozen to go, now let's collect the corpse, I have one final piece of business to attend to before I return."

The mobsters nodded, before Barone cast a few charms to make sure no one else was in the area and sure enough there was not. So they moved in to do what the feared mob boss had ordered.

To say that the last few months had tested what passed as his patience would be an understatement to Voldemort. Having to deal with nearly hourly assassin attacks, some of the most skilled and cunning witches and wizards in the world had pushed Voldemort to his limits. The fact these individuals were not tied down by Ministry restrictions like Aurors made the battle a bit more level and while Voldemort was absolutely confident of his abilities to defeat these assassins in a legitimate duel, they did not necessarily play by any rules of dueling etiquette. They managed to break inside, throw a barrage of lethal spells at Voldemort, and get out, before the Dark

Lord could put them in their place. The fact that his followers had the tendency to recently wind up dead in strange and humiliating ways had caused many of them, except for the extremely insane, to be afraid to go out at night. That was frustrating as the best time to inspire fear in Mudbloods, Muggles, blood traitors, and pretty much anyone else who looked at Voldemort funny, was at night. Voldemort reflected these thoughts in his mind as he sat in his fortress, a large rock structure shaped like a dark mark.

At that moment, the door opened and Voldemort quickly sprung up, wand drawn, ready to curse anything that moved, but it was one of his Death Eaters, Voldemort did not care which. The Death Eater knelt before him, carrying a package.

"Speak," prompted Voldemort.

"My Lord, this package came for you..." stated the Death Eater but Voldemort quickly put up a shield charm over the package.

"You fool, this package could have been cursed!" thundered Voldemort. "Some assassin wanting to collect a million galleons because of that contract that fool Barone put on me."

"Please, my Lord, it's my first day," pleaded the Death Eater.

"Very well, but don't slip up again," cautioned Voldemort as he used his wand to open up the package, as the Death Eater hastily retreated before Voldemort had a change of heart. Carefully, Voldemort opened up the package and immediately he spotted a card. Quickly, Voldemort snatched it in his hand, reading the contents.

Riddle,

Just an early Christmas present for you

Your friend,

Barone.

Voldemort looked in the box and inside was the decapitated head of Bellatrix Lestrange. While Voldemort could hardly care about Bellatrix

personally, the fact that one of his top Death Eaters was now dead thanks to Barone. The mobster was taunting Barone and the fact that several of his Death Eaters were slain at his hands, proved that the mobster did not fear the Dark Lord. In a matter of time, Voldemort felt he would have to correct that little personality flaw in the foolish Mudblood. That thought went through Voldemort's head, just before a bludgeoning spell nearly did. Another assassin had attempted to collect some quick gold and Voldemort quickly whipped his wand, sending one of the hundreds of deadly spells at his opponent, but only the wall suffered, as the assassin conjured an arrow dipped in poison and banished it right at Voldemort, before making a quick exit. Voldemort just barely avoided being impaled by the poisoned arrow, reducing it into dust just a second before it would have struck.

Looking both ways before he crossed the hallway to address his legions of minions, Voldemort took each step carefully, hand on his wand, these assassins were starting to the greatest wizard who ever lived. The fact that he was losing warm bodies daily did not help, he would have to regroup and step up his plans to take over before Barone eliminated every single Death Eater in his employ.

Harry had returned to Hogwarts in the latter part of the morning, a bit tired but rather cheerful, as he entered the Ravenclaw Common Room. Hermione seemed to have gotten up early to do some reading .

"You seem to be in a good mood and in one piece, which is a fortunate thing," remarked Hermione casually, only slightly looking up from the book she was reading.

"I had Bellatrix Lestrange iced last night, now I'm going up to bed for a couple of hours, good night Hermione," said Harry quickly as he made his way up the stairs.

"Wait a minute, you went after her," replied Hermione in a frantic voice. "Dobby just told me you went hunting..."

"It isn't like I knocked on Voldemort's door and ran off cackling," said Harry waving off Hermione. "Although, if I have nothing to do this weekend..."

“Well, killing all these Death Eaters, someone’s bound to notice, not that I blame you for doing so,” replied Hermione quickly. “But, what if you kill someone who’s repentant, someone who regrets joining up with him...”

“I understand and I’ve thought about this, until I found out what has to be done to receive a dark mark,” responded Harry. “Horrific acts are required to perform the ritual, it isn’t as simple as just getting a tattoo. I don’t want to talk about the specifics Hermione, you’ll get nightmares, but I’ll say this, putting down a Death Eater is just like putting down a rabid dog. It’s for their own good along with everyone else, as long as they lived, they are inflicted with an irreversible curse tying them to Voldemort.”

Harry sighed, remembering if he had found this out before, he might have shed all of his beliefs about how killing was wrong sooner and they might not be in the situation, where he had to do things all over again.

“It will force Voldemort to play his hand sooner and maybe I can beat him,” said Harry but he then sighed. “Although I don’t know how, I gave Flamel a detailed memory of that battle with Voldemort, including how he was resurrected, and he, along with several other of the top minds in the Wizarding World, to find a flaw in Voldemort’s new body, that can be exploited so I can put him down, but so far nothing.”

“I’m sure something would break soon, hopefully before Voldemort takes over again,” replied Hermione in a reassuring voice before she decided to change the subject. “Now, Harry, I need to ask you something else.”

“Can it wait a few hours Hermione?” yawned Harry but the look on Hermione’s face, one that Harry knew all too well, indicated that she could not wait at all. “Very well, what is it?”

“What are you going to tell Luna, Harry?” asked Hermione and Harry did a double take, a look of confusion appearing on his face.

“What are you getting at Hermione?” inquired Harry in an absolute baffled voice.

"Harry, she's going to figure it out sooner or later, from what you've told me, she's extremely bright and able to put two and two together," responded Hermione and awaited Harry's answer.

"Hermione, it's more complicated than you think," said Harry in a tense voice.

"Oh, yes I believe exactly how complicated you think it is, Harry," replied Hermione with a slight smirk. "You might want to try the truth, I'm sure Luna will understand."

"She may," agreed Harry grudgingly. "I'm still not going to do it."

"Why not?" demanded Hermione.

"Because," said Harry as he wondered what he could say, what he should say. "I can't let it happen again. Mere words can't illustrate how miserable I was last time...it's for the best, friendship is all I can hope for right now."

"So you're afraid?" asked Hermione, who had known Harry for so long and spent so much time with him that she could read him like a picture book but the ice cold look Harry was giving her, caused Hermione to step back, she had obviously said too much.

"Afraid, no I'm not afraid, I've fought dark wizards, Dementors, vampires, werewolves, giants, ,withstood many Molly Weasley howlers, and Merlin knows what else, so I don't know fear," responded Harry frostily and Hermione just sank back into the shadows, feeling she deserved whatever rant Harry propelled her way with that comment that accidentally slipped through her mouth. "Hermione, I like you, you're my best friend, but don't try and figure out what I'm thinking. Trust me, my mind's not a pleasant place to be and trying to figure it out is next to impossible. My unique predicament makes it impossible for me to be with anyone beyond friendship but this is a whole entirely new level that no one can comprehend. Good night!"

Harry walked off and Hermione sat there, obviously what happened to Luna in the past timeline was a very sore spot for Harry and she resolved not to bring it up again to Harry, even though she felt that it

would be best for Harry to tell Luna everything. Still, pressuring Harry into doing something he obviously was unwilling to face might not be the best thing and Hermione decided to let the matter drop, at least for the time being.

On the lighter side of life, after many years of extensive therapy, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third Esquire was released from the Insane Asylum. Other than the slight obsessive compulsive disorder that he had, he was declared to be completely mentally healthy, providing that he took his medication twice a day.

"Halt there mate," said a voice and Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire, looked down, to spot and three and a half foot tall man with a mullet and a porn star mustache. "At last, I've got you, Voldemort, you aren't going to get out this time ya wanker."

"I beg your pardon sir but I'm Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire, not this Lord Voldemort you seek," said Gillworth in a pompous voice. "I suggest you stand out of my way or I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth the Third, Esquire, will have to teach you a lesson in respect."

"Nice try mate, but that elaborate disguise won't fool I, Killer Schwartz," remarked Killer Schwartz.

"Killer Schwartz?" inquired Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire.

"Yes, my friends call me Killer Schwartz, and my enemies call me...Killer Schwartz," responded Killer Schwartz. "Now are you going to stand down, Voldemort, or will I have to give you a sound bushwhacking."

Gillworth looked before the psychotic dwarf had grabbed him by the shirt and flipped him to the ground, before holding a wacky magical spear at his throat.

"Help, help, let me back in!" yelled Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire. "I, Professor Remington Q. Gillworth, the Third, Esquire, am still very sick. There is a psychotic pixie trying to kill me."

"That bounty will be mine!" cheered Killer Schwartz triumphantly, as Gillworth attempted to get away, but Schwartz jabbed his spear in mid air, causing a net to appear and wrap around Gillworth, causing Gillworth to crash down, smashing his head on some rocks. "Ah, that's a piece of bad luck, I guess you aren't Lord Voldemort, because Voldemort would not be put down by a mere net."

Killer Schwartz looked down at Gillworth, as blood was oozing from his skull.

"Sorry about the crushed skull, mate," remarked Killer Schwartz, as he walked off, leaving Gillworth to bleed to a slow, and agonizing death, as Schwartz continued on his quest to collect the bounty on the Dark Lord Voldemort. Soon he would be rich beyond all belief and he could retire in luxury, to an island full of scantily clad women.

Back at Hogwarts, Harry had woken up only a couple of hours after he went to sleep, he was used to getting very little sleep when on the run from Voldemort and Death Eaters for several years in the past timeline, he needed to be ready to spring up at a moment's notice on a minimum of energy. The first sight that greeted Harry really did not put him in a good mood, as it was a group of first year Ravenclaw girls creeping from the dormitory, determined not to be seen. Perhaps Harry was being paranoid, but since Luna was not among them, Harry had a pretty good idea what they were up to. It was a shame some people just could not stand that others were a bit different, but once again, Harry was going to have to teach some people a really painful lesson.

"That Lovegood, Dad always said her father was a nutcase and her mother was a bit eccentric herself, tampering in all sorts of magic, so we need to teach a lesson, before she becomes too much of a problem," muttered one of the girls but they looked up to see Harry standing right in front of him.

"Merlin it's Harry Potter!" yelled one of the girls and another attempted to hide herself in the background, her hair was not straight and she could not look like crap in the presence of Harry Potter.

“Good morning ladies,” replied Harry in a calm voice. “Now, I couldn’t help but here your nefarious plans to make my friend Luna’s life miserable.”

“Wait she’s your friend,” said one of the girls quickly, looking rather appalled that the great Harry Potter would befriend such a misfit.

“Yes, got a problem with that,” challenged Harry in a calm voice. “Still, if you do anything to Luna, you’ll have to answer to me and my little friend.”

“Hello,” hissed Vinny as he popped out of Harry’s sleeve, causing the first year girls to shriek and jump back in terror at the sight of a snake staring them right in the face, hissing at them from their point of view.

“Eek, a snake,” shrieked one of the girls.

“So, annoy me by making Luna’s life a living hell and...well just say, you’ll end up like poor Ralphie,” replied Harry in a mysterious tone of voice.

“Now Harry, there’s no need to bring up Ralphie, you’ll scare them half to death,” remarked Hermione as she walked in, as if nothing happened.

“Who’s Ralphie?” asked one of the girls.

“He annoyed me one day, really bad, tried to make my friends upset, something that I don’t take too kindly to,” replied Harry. “Then the day after he annoyed me, he was never seen ever again.”

“What happened to him?” asked one of the girls.

“You really don’t want to know,” said Hermione cryptically. “So the moral of the story is, don’t make Harry upset.”

“No, we won’t, in fact, we’ll return her stuff right away and be nice to her, right,” said one of the girls quickly, as the rest of them nodded fearfully, the fact that Vinny was staring at them with a rather hungry look in his eyes hastened their arrival up the stairs.

“Such gullible humans, I was under the impressions that Ravensclaws were supposed to be smart,” remarked Vinny calmly.

“They are for the most part, but they’re only human, not some mindless, fact speaking drones,” muttered Harry.

“You do realize that they’ll find out that the Ralphie story was a sham eventually,” remarked Hermione casually.

“Yes, but I think they’ll be smart enough to know that it’s not a good idea to upset someone with a snake,” countered Harry as Luna made her way down the stairs of her dormitory, as the other girls stepped back.

“Hello Luna, good morning to you,” replied one of the girls nervously, as the others seemed to nervously offer similar greetings, especially when they saw Harry standing from the other end of the room.

“Good morning,” said Luna cheerfully as she walked over to Harry and Hermione who were waiting over by the exit to the Common Room, to go off to Breakfast. “I was wrong about them.”

“How so, Luna?” asked Harry.

“Well, I thought they were a bit cold to me last night, most people would be, because it’s not like many people understand the genius of my father’s work and might ridicule me for that,” responded Luna.

“A shame,” said Harry and Luna nodded in absolute agreement, as Hermione just turned her face to hide the slight smile that was appearing on her face, before the three Ravensclaws made their way down to Breakfast.

The first week of the second year passed much like the majority of Harry’s first year, perhaps it was the fact that Harry had already lived through most of this stuff once before. In fact, he finished his homework in no time, which allowed him to go out beside the lake and just be left alone with his thoughts. All of his other friends had homework to do but some time after he sat down, much to his surprise, Luna had joined him.

“Hi Luna,” said Harry as she approached him. “What brings you out here?”

“Well since I’ve gotten my homework for this weekend completed, I supposed that it might be a good idea to come out get some fresh air, after all, plenty of fresh air makes you live a lot longer, at least that’s what Mum says,” answered Luna, as she sat down beside Harry. “So how are doing this weekend?”

“I’m fine, how about you?” asked Harry.

“Good thanks for asking,” replied Luna happily as she looked at Harry, studying him for a couple of seconds. “You don’t like it at all, do you?”

Harry stared at Luna, politely waiting for her to finish.

“The fame, being gawked at by everyone just because you’re Harry Potter,” responded Luna. “It’s not that hard to figure out, you’d rather be a face in the crowd, than the fact that attracts a crowd.”

“That about sums up everything Luna, I just wish more people would figure that out,” said Harry.

“I wish I could tell you they will, but I can’t lie to you Harry, people like those who are famous, they don’t realize that you have a life, problems, friends, just like them,” said Luna. “Still, most famous people do ask for it, but you didn’t. Your name was known by everyone but it’s not really worth it, is it?”

“No,” replied Harry. “There are people who fancy me, they’ve never met me in my life, they don’t make the effort, when you think of it, it doesn’t make sense.”

“Much like life itself,” responded Luna. “I mean, when it all boils do to it, life really isn’t supposed to make sense. As far as I’m concerned, we all exist for the amusement of some higher power, and if something makes sense, it’s purely by accident.”

Luna sighed, almost remorsefully.

“The topic is something that I’m sorry to bring up, but at least I can sleep at night knowing that you’re not someone who would let their fame run away with them,” continued Luna. “Not many would take everything like you have, others would embrace the hordes of willing fan girls throwing themselves at them, the fame, the free press, and everything that goes on with them, not realizing how much of a curse it might be.”

“I just want to be judged on my own merits,” said Harry, more to himself than to Luna. “Not what someone heard about me.”

“I do too Harry, no doubt many would call me odd, or insane, or even Looney,” remarked Luna. “But, what if I’m the only sane one, and everyone else is crazy?”

“Well, I think I’m just as sane as you, Luna,” said Harry with a smile which caused Luna to laugh. “So either we’re both really eccentric or the entire world is batty, I’m not sure which is more frightening.”

“We may never know,” concluded Luna mysteriously. “Still, tell me about yourself Harry, I don’t think our meeting on the train really scratched the surface.”

A group of rookie Death Eaters was meeting a secret supplier of rare and quite dangerous Potion ingredients at an abandoned Muggle ice rink. Why their benefactor had requested a meeting of here at all places?

“Hello, anyone here,” said the lead Death Eater, his voice echoing throughout the ice rink.

“Yes,” remarked a voice from the distance, submerged in the shadows.

“Do you have the products?” asked the leader.

“Depends, do you have the gold?” responded their mysterious benefactor.

“Of course,” replied the leader, as he held out the bag, which jingled in the distance and the hand was visible, before a vial containing a

light blue substance was thrown right at the feet of the Death Eaters. As it shattered, white mist appeared when the potion connected with the ice and when it cleared, the Death Eaters were covered in solid ice, from the neck down, unable to move their arms to wave their wands as the form of Barone walked out of the shadows, with a twisted grin upon his face.

"Ice to meet you, gentlemen," responded Barone as the Death Eaters looked on fearfully, as the feared mobster had approached them.

"Barone!" shouted the leader. "What are you going to do to us?"

"It just so happens that you're going to be part of my new business venture, Death Eaters on Ice!" announced Barone in a twisted, slightly cheerful voice before he straightened up mockingly. "No, wait, sorry, there's a correction, it really called Death Eaters: Iced!"

Barone nodded, as he stepped forward, before casually picking up the sack of gold that the Death Eaters kept.

"Sorry to give you the cold shoulder, but I have a timetable to keep," continued Barone. "Still, I guess I can chill for a few more seconds."

"Are you trying to kill us Barone or drive us insane with those bad puns?" demanded one of the Death Eaters.

"A little of both actually," admitted Barone, as stepped back, before giving a mocking bow. "Now, children, I would explain my brilliantly sophisticated plan, but really, what kind of mob boss would I be if I did that? So, before you die, keep it cool."

Barone walked off, as the next thing the Death Eaters knew, a loud explosion echoed throughout the building, dropping the entire ceiling down on them, shattering their frozen forms to pieces and cutting Voldemort's ranks down by a few more.

It was now the third year. The second year was just another school year, rather quiet considering there was not a basilisk petrifying people right and left. Harry briefly considered letting the basilisk loose for his own amusement, but decided against it, after all, it might accidentally kill someone who had the potential to be a valuable part

of the Wizarding World, along with all the dunderheads Harry was certain to eliminate. Voldemort was up to no good but remained mostly under the radar, staving off assassin tasks and a few Death Eaters dropping dead, but most of who remained had gotten the hint, going under group. The mob organization acquired more businesses, made more money, in other words, business as usual and Harry spent most of his time living a semi-normal life, with his friends, whenever he could manage to find the time.

“Hogsmeade finally!” yelled Blaise in an excited voice, as she walked towards the village, with Neville, Harry, and Hermione. They were meeting up with the Twins in a short while, who didn’t seem to believe in going out with the others, rather wanting to sneak out a couple hours early to enjoy more time. “True, I had to beg Dad to sign the permission slip, he’s paranoid that a rival would abduct me right out of the Wizarding village, despite the fact it’s a one in a million shot that someone would find out that I was going.”

“Considering the story’s I’ve heard about your father, I would think that he wouldn’t want to play those odds,” remarked Harry which prompted Blaise to stick her tongue out.

“Well, I’ve heard that your guardian goes water skiing on vacation, on the backs of dead Death Eaters,” said Blaise with a bit of a smirk.

“Actually, snowboarding,” corrected Harry. “It’s really a highly underrated sport, except when the corpse falls apart and you get covered in maggots.”

“Do you have any idea what those two are talking about?” muttered Neville in an undertone to Hermione.

“It’s best not to,” replied Hermione shaking her head. “So, I must say Hogsmeade is an extremely interesting place, the first...”

“Hermione, I’m sure the history of the village is interesting, but Honeydukes and Zonkos are the real attraction,” said Harry cutting off Hermione in mid speech, as they entered the village.

“Not to mention the Shrieking Shack,” piped up Neville. “It’s the most haunted place in all of Britain, even the Hogwarts ghosts are afraid of it.”

“The Bloody Baron isn’t,” said Blaise moodily. “Still, many don’t want to approach it, they fear retribution from the vengeful spirits that live there.”

“Nah, I don’t think whoever lives there is really all that scary, unless it’s that time of the month,” remarked Harry, catching Hermione’s eye who was struggling hard not to snicker.

“So, that must mean that female ghosts live there,” said Blaise. “That makes sense, they are a bit more temperamental, consider Moaning Myrtle...”

“I try not to consider Moaning Myrtle, my life is a lot easier,” inputted Hermione.

“Well anyone who haunts a toilet does have some serious issues,” admitted Blaise, which caused them all to share a laugh at this but they stopped to see a few Aurors patrolling the village. “Wonder why all the Aurors are here?”

“Well, Voldemort,” replied Hermione which caused Blaise and Neville to both cringe. “Honestly, there is a chance he might try something, consider this is Harry’s first trip...”

“Actually, I’d be very surprised if Voldemort came here, Hogsmeade isn’t exactly a soft target, there are a fair few Aurors who live here, along with those who are on patrol,” replied Blaise. “He just doesn’t seem like a person who attacks in broad daylight.”

“Unless he’s desperate,” said Hermione.

“Given how many Death Eaters were killed recently...” stated Neville as he looked around.

“Don’t worry about it Neville, Voldemort doesn’t have the guts to attack a village in broad daylight,” said Harry in a reassuring voice,

and at that minute, a loud bang echoed throughout the village and everyone screamed in terror.

“EVERYONE RUN, ITS YOU-KNOW-WHO!” shouted one of the villagers, as panic induced an atmosphere of complete chaos within the village.

“So sue me,” muttered Harry as Blaise, Neville, and Hermione were all looking at him, as the Death Eaters poured into the village.

“All students return to the school immediately!” yelled one of the Aurors and students rushed, as several spells shot from both sides, as the chaos reigned down on the village. It was a fortunate thing that not all of the students had left the school, so it was easy.

“All civilians run for cover!” ordered Mad-Eye Moody in a gruff voice as he thumped over, before he quickly secured a Death Eater who went after a group of fourth year students. Another Death Eater sent a cutting curse right at Moody who avoided it before the grizzled dark wizard catcher expertly knocked his opponent loopy with a concussion hex.

Blaise, Hermione, and Neville had reached the school, several others panting, the teachers looking rather confused.

“Attacking the village in broad day light, I thought he wouldn’t do so,” said Blaise.

“Well he’s getting desperate, right Harry?” asked Hermione before she realized Harry was not with them. “Of for the love of...he’s still in the village...”

Harry, now under the guise of Barone, walked into the village, surveying the situation. Since his past duel with Voldemort, he had studied and practiced his magic whenever possible, but the problem was he was still working against an enemy that had fifty years of experience over him, even after living two lifetimes. He watched as young Auror that was maybe in his late twenties was taken out by an unmasked Dolohov, one of Voldemort’s top Death Eaters. Moody turned to Dolohov.

“Moody, I haven’t properly thanked you for landing me in Azkaban,” said Dolohov in a raspy tone of voice, as he sent a lethal spell at Moody. Moody, showing great agility for someone with his age and physical handicaps, managed to avoid the shot and attempt to send shackles to bind Dolohov.

A loud bang and Moody had to defend himself against a series of razor sharp daggers that were blasted towards him. Moody winced as he dropped to the ground, blood dripping from his forearm.

“Age has made a fool out of you Moody,” taunted Dolohov but the Death Eater was stopped in mid taunt with a bone shattering hex to his wand arm, which he had to block.

A loud bang and Dolohov just barely put up the solid projectile shield charm to block the bullet sent right at him. Dolohov turned, face to face with Barone, with a twisted smile appearing on the Death Eater’s face.

“Ah, the mobster that has been giving the Dark Lord so many problems, no doubt he’ll award me for taking you out,” taunted Dolohov before he slashed his wand. Barone recognized this curse immediately and quickly blocked it but Moody caught Dolohov from behind with a spell that had sent the Death Eater into shock.

“CONSTANT VIGILANCE!” barked Moody before he turned to Barone. “You, what are you doing here?”

“Enjoying the hunt,” responded Barone calmly, as he casually blasted another Death Eater right down from a high perch that he stood upon to get some leverage.

“Beat it Barone, I don’t have no time to deal with vigilant mobsters,” said Moody in a grouchy tone of voice. “I appreciate what you’re doing and all, but at the same time, the Ministry’s looking for an excuse to bring you in.”

“That’s a chance that I’m willing to take,” said Barone. “Where’s the big guy?”

“You mean Voldemort?” inquired Moody and Barone nodded calmly. “He’s sealed himself in the former Hog’s Head, but it’s not a good idea for you to go in. You play a good game Barone, but you’re out of your league, kid, we’re dealing with someone that Dumbledore couldn’t even stop.”

“Dumbledore didn’t have the imagination to do what was necessary,” responded Barone, before he moved out, ducking out of sight and Moody did not have much time to bother with him, as he had to rush over to assist one of his teammates against the Death Eater he was facing off against.

In the Hog’s Head, Voldemort enjoyed the chaos. The entire Wizarding World needed a reminder of why they should fear him and an attack on Hogsmeade weekend, even if it was a trial run, would be serve his reputation.

At that second, the doors of the Hog’s Head burst open and Voldemort looked up, to find himself face to face with Nicholas Flamel, who walked up to Voldemort, wand raised.

“Flamel,” remarked Voldemort calmly. “Looking for some help to speed up the process to the afterlife?”

“No you cocky young upstart, as the Headmaster of Hogwarts, it’s my responsible to protect the students at any cost, but unlike Dumbledore, I’m a bit more hands on!” cried Flamel as a ball of solid orange light flew right towards Voldemort, a spell that Voldemort did not recognize so he quickly moved out of the way. The ball completely disintegrated everything it came into contact with.

Voldemort turned around and Flamel quickly whipped his wand down to the ground. The entire ground beneath Voldemort’s feet rumbled and Voldemort was propelled to the air. The ancient wizard was not done yet, as he quickly shot a burst of magical energy right towards Voldemort’s chest. Voldemort screamed in anger, as the spell made it see like he got a really bad case of heart burn.

“ENOUGH!” thundered Voldemort as he slashed his wand at Flamel and Flamel conjured a solid gold energy dome over him. The spell was ricocheted back at Voldemort at three times the speed and

Voldemort was cut by his own spell for a few seconds, before his arm healed.

"Seems if we have a stand still, Riddle," remarked Flamel.

"Perhaps, you ancient relic, but I doubt it," said Voldemort, before he calmly waved his hand, promptly his snake Nagini erupted from out of nowhere, fangs bared and about to sink into Flamel's chest.

Before Nagini could reach Flamel, Vinny the snake sprang out of nowhere, knocking the much larger snake out of the way. Nagini turned to see Vinny staring her down.

"Go ahead, bitch, make my day," hissed Vinny, as he stared down Nagini, baring his fangs.

"You meddling serpent, I'll make you pay for defying the Dark Lord," responded Nagini in with a venomous hiss, , as the two snakes responded by hissing back and forth, neither willing to back down, despite Vinny giving up a fair amount of size to the much larger Nagini.

"So, at last Riddle, we meet," remarked Barone as he stepped into the picture. "Attacking this village was an idiotic maneuver."

"AVADA KEDAVRA!" yelled Voldemort but Barone had conjured a large stone shield which impacted the entire brunt of the curse.

"And that was a predictable one," taunted Barone as Voldemort stood, as the two snakes continued to hiss at each other on the ground.

"Barone, we need not fight, if we join forces, no one could stop us," offered Voldemort. "You would be among the top Death Eaters."

"That's not much, considering I killed every one of your idiotically faithful followers that were worth a damn," said Barone in a bored tone of voice. "I've got a better idea, disband your little club of social misfits and I'll allow you to join my organization. A position just opened for a janitor at headquarters and I suppose that might be right up your street Riddle, considering you're full of shit."

“You dare mock Lord Voldemort,” demanded Voldemort.

“I think you do a perfectly fine job of doing that yourself, Riddle,” responded Barone with a smug expression.

“Nagini, to me,” hissed Voldemort and Nagini reluctantly slithered away just before she was going to make her move against Vinny.

“That’s right, you better run, bitch,” taunted Vinny and quickly a large burst of platinum light in the form of rings erupted from Voldemort’s wand.

“Get away, that spell will destabilize all magic for approximately the next five minutes!” warned Flamel but it was too late as Barone and Flamel were both simultaneously struck with the spells, causing Barone to drop to the ground. Since, he had no magic to hold the form, Barone morphed back into the form of Harry Potter.

“SON OF A MOTHER FUCKING BITCH!” yelled Harry in absolute horror, his cover had been blown right in front of the person that he least wanted it to.

“WHAT?” thundered Voldemort, as he stepped back in surprise, eyes widened in shock, forgetting the supreme amount of fatigue he felt after using that spell. “Potter...”

Voldemort observed Harry for a few seconds, as if scarcely believing what he had seen himself but yet he could not deny it.

“Barone and Harry Potter one in the same,” said Voldemort, it seemed absurd, but yet Voldemort always believed the evidence when it was staring right in front of him. “I can see everything clearly now, there is only one logical explanation that a young child could be able to run a mafia organization at such a young age...”

Voldemort nodded, looking rather pleased, as if Christmas had come early, and Harry knew the jig was up, Voldemort was about to figure out that he had come from the future.

“When I struck Potter with the Killing Curse on that night, instead of killing him, the burst of heavy magic had affected his mind, giving him

super intelligence, leagues beyond the level of anyone else his age,” said Voldemort. “Naturally, that has to be the explanation, I’m certain fools would point to something like time travel, but I, Lord Voldemort, am certain that this is the only possible explanation. Perhaps a second Killing Curse would reduce that intelligence...”

“Are you sure you want to risk that it won’t kill me Riddle?” asked Harry. “Remember the Prophecy.”

“Yes, perhaps I’ll kill Flamel instead,” said Voldemort coldly but Flamel looked at Voldemort, unable to do magic because of the extremely dark and powerful curse, but his eyes were still blazing with determination.

“Give it your best shot, I doubt you can succeed where the Grim Reaper has failed,” challenged Flamel but before Voldemort could test this theory, the front wall of the Hogs Head was blown open, just before Harry’s magic had kicked back in and he reverted back to the form of Barone.

“End of the line, you’re under arrest,” barked the head of the Auror Office, Rufus Scrimgeour. “Come quietly, it’s time for you to go to Azkaban to pay for your crimes.”

“Yes, woe is me, I surrender,” said Voldemort sarcastically as Barone and Flamel joined the ground, staring Voldemort. “Really, no prison you fools can build can contain me, you’ll have to kill me and only a really powerful wizard even has a chance, not that they’ll succeed.”

“Someone will put you down, murderer,” grunted Moody, his magical eye whizzing in every which direction.

“And a message to Harry Potter, one way or the other, he will join me,” said Voldemort cryptically, not bothering to out Potter as Barone, as quite frankly he had nothing to gain and doubted that many fools would believe him. “All he holds dear will be taken away from him and if he continues to defy me at every turn, this is just an example of what will happen to his friends. Remember, any blood is on your hands, Potter.”

Voldemort quickly blasted a jet of solid gold light right towards Mad-Eye Moody. The spell traveled so fast, that Moody did not even see it coming until it hit. Everyone gasped as Mad-Eye Moody blew to bits, reducing him to nothing but a few bone fragments and some drops of blood.

“Guess, you should have practiced Constant Vigilance a bit more, Moody,” taunted Voldemort, as several Aurors angrily shot spells right at Voldemort but Voldemort vanished into mid air, after viciously slaying one of the best Aurors that he ever could in the middle of Hogsmeade, just because he could.

This chapter was what it was, just a chapter, a means to get from one point of the story to the next. A few fun scenes and couple of things happen to set the stage for future events, but really, nothing groundbreaking. Of course, that’s just my opinion. The next chapter will be up by the end of May, I hope.

Chapter Twenty Two: Amazing Perils.

Harry sat in one of his many bases of operation, a few days after his fifth year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, deep in reflection after the events over the past several years. After the attempted attack on Hogsmeade, Voldemort and his Death Eaters had sufficiently scaled back their operations. In fact, other than the odd attack on a Muggle village just remind the world that he could come back full force at any time, no sign of Voldemort or any of his followers could be found. Rumors reached Harry that Voldemort had taken to recruiting abroad, but attempting to find out exactly where Voldemort was attempting to recruit dangerous dark wizards and other notorious magical fugitives from was a bit more difficult than Harry had ever thought. The Ministry of Magic for the most part seemed content to ignore Voldemort's existence, providing he did not stage any major attacks that shook the landscape of Wizarding Britain.

Harry looked over to the picture on his desk, with him and Luna sitting by the lake, hanging out, laughing and another problem that was far more complex than anything Voldemort could throw at him reared its head. The internal struggle within Harry, including one feeling that Harry did his best to suppress, for the good of everyone, most of all himself. When he was thrown back at time, Harry knew that nothing could ever be the same than it was before. At his most vulnerable moments, which granted were few and far between, Harry wondered what could have been and what should have been. Harry hated this, it distracted him from the mission, his sole purpose in life, and that was to defeat Voldemort, wipe him out of existence for once of all. He never thought of any life post Voldemort.

Harry would have loved to tell Luna, but he refused to fall into that trap again. Luna was about as close as Harry was going to let anyone get, until Voldemort was six feet deep under and even then, the unique circumstances of Harry's very existence caused the Boy-Who-Lived feel that he could never have a normal relationship. Harry saw it in his minds eye, should he live to be one hundred, he would be a bitter, crazy, lonely, old man, who yelled at kids and small animals for being on his lawn, because of this wretched time travel thing and whatever remaining fragments of Harry's own moral fiber existence.

Not to mention that Harry could not bare the same thing that happened before, to happen again. Quite frankly, at the moment, Harry hoped he came across a Death Eater or even some idiot who did not pay his debts when his mob loaned money, because he needed someone to take his frustrations out on.

At that second, the door knob turned on Harry's door and as it opened, Harry quickly moved up with cat like reflexes, wand drawn, quickly grabbing the person by the arm and flinging her to the ground. Quickly Harry was on top of her, with his wand drawn.

"Harry, wait, it's just me!" pleaded Blaise in a slightly urgent voice and Harry stepped back, still a bit cautious, allowing his friend to pull herself up to a standing position, as Blaise got to her feet with a bit of a smirk on her face. "So do you treat your girlfriend that roughly, Harry?"

"What girlfriend Blaise?" responded Harry in a would be calm voice.

"Harry, it's obvious, okay maybe not to you, but to ninety nine percent of the world, that you and Luna are all but dating as much time you spend together, it's just a formality, I don't know why you don't ask her out, you have nothing to lose," commented Blaise, with smug look.

"More than you think," muttered Harry, as he reflected to the previous timeline, before he responded in a robotic tone of voice. "I like Luna as a friend and nothing more."

"Right and I'm Voldemort's secret mistress," commented Blaise in a sarcastic tone of voice. "Seriously, Harry, you really should have been sorted into Slytherin, you can bullshit with a straight face."

"Right, and exactly why are you here, Blaise, I hardly believe that this is a social visit and furthermore, exactly how did you find this place in the first place," replied Harry in an abrupt "I don't want to talk about this now or ever" tone of voice.

"Well, it wasn't easy, but Dad found out the location of one of Barone's buildings, completely by accident of course, I'm not sure he even knew what he came by, but it's quite fortunate that you were here Harry," replied Blaise.

"This is the building that's common knowledge, there are several others better hidden, I just stay here, because I doubt Riddle would think that I would stay in such an obvious place," said Harry quickly. "Speaking of which, were you followed?"

"No, I don't think they even saw me, they were just shooting the Dark Mark over the house when I came home and they left," remarked Blaise, a frantic tone creeping into her voice. "My Dad's been kidnapped by Death Eaters, why I don't know, but he was."

"Well, I have a theory, considering it's easy enough to find out we're friends, Riddle's captured your father as bait to lure you to him, so he can capture you and use you as bait to me to him," said Harry slowly. "I know, it's insane but considering it's Riddle, it makes perfect sense."

"If I had been home, I think he might have just killed Dad and took me," replied Blaise but Harry just shrugged. "Oh, and something else, I found written on the wall in blood, that hints that if any Aurors get involved my father will be killed."

"So, I'm sure your father has tons of people who could search for him," suggested Harry but Blaise shook her head.

"No, the Death Eaters killed all of the bodyguards at the house and the rest are spread too thin as it is, but I thought maybe your guardian would have an idea of where to look," remarked Blaise as she looked around. "Any idea where Barone is by the way, Harry?"

"I'm afraid he's out for few days, I don't know when he'll return," replied Harry, who did not wish to reveal his dual identity to the daughter of his mob rival, even if he trusted her one hundred percent.

"Do you have any way to contact him?" asked Blaise in a hopeful voice.

"No, and besides if I could, he doesn't really like to be disturbed," said Harry in a tense voice, and Blaise suddenly become rather downtrodden, but suddenly her eyes brightened slightly.

"Well, maybe you can help me, I mean, you've fought Voldemort before..." replied Blaise but Harry cut her off.

“And was nearly beaten to a bloody pulp,” said Harry darkly, but he did want to test his skills against Voldemort.

“That was during your first year, you’ve worked hard since, I’ve seen you training, hell, I was stupid enough to agree to duel with you that one time, which I assure you is not happening again,” replied Blaise with a shudder. “Unless you won’t me to go myself...”

“No, I’ll help,” said Harry. “The best thing to do would be to go back to the scene of the crime, perhaps we can find a clue that was left, whether it was accident or Riddle had it planted to lure someone into a trap.”

Sometime later, Blaise and Harry entered the Zabini Mafia headquarters office building, Harry taking extra steps to make sure that no one had left any nasty dark magic surprises. Cautiously, Harry shined a light from his wand over the door knob, but saw nothing that could implicate anyone in the crime. The lock clicked and they entered the office building, as he looked across the window, at the grisly sight of one of Boss Zabini’s bodyguards, hanging impaled on a tree branch.

‘This is where Dad stays, but they must have cleaned up a little bit,’ muttered Blaise, but Harry raised his hand, as he looked over to a corner in the office.

“You’re right Blaise, there’s nothing here, I guess we have to go back, and maybe look for something we missed...GOTCHA SCUMBAG!” shouted Harry abruptly as he seemed to grope into thin air and Blaise raised her eyebrows, before Harry cancelled a disillusionment charm, revealing a Death Eater who had been hiding in a corner. The Death Eater raised his wand, but Harry blasted it from his hand, before he stepped on it, snapping it in two.

“Let go of me you nutcase,” begged the Death Eater, but Harry stared in his foe’s face.

“What were you doing here?” demanded Harry, as he held his wand and the Death Eater looked absolutely fearful as several sparks bounced off the wall, burning noticeable holes into it.

"The Zabini girl...I was sent back here...to tell the Dark Lord...if she came back," stuttered the Death Eater.

"And why did Voldemort take my father?" asked Blaise dangerously.

"You'll get nothing out of me, you little cunt!" shouted the Death Eater but he paled when he saw the look on Harry's face.

"Listen to me, I have questions and you better have answers or else," remarked Harry in his most dangerous voice.

"Or what, Potter?" demanded the Death Eater.

"Well, let's just say I hope you've learned to walk without legs or arms, or a body," responded Harry, as he raised his arm, pointing his wand right in the man's throat. "So, you better talk now, where did Voldemort take Blaise's father?"

"Uh, a maze, yeah, in a park," stammered the Death Eater but Blaise put her hand on Harry's shoulder.

"Harry, mind if I handle this for a minute?" asked Blaise sweetly and Harry nodded, before Blaise quickly pointed her wand at the Death Eater, slamming him against the wall, before she suspended the Death Eater upside down by the ceiling. "COULD YOU JUST BE A BIT MORE BLOODY SPECIFIC!"

"Godric's Hollow, it's Godric's Hollow, the park, right across from the old Potter place," stammered the Death Eater and Harry's expression slightly darkening when it was announced where it is.

"Harry?" asked Blaise in a concerned voice.

"I'm fine," replied Harry before he turned to the Death Eater. "What's Voldemort hoping to accomplish with this plan?"

"He didn't say, well not outright, but he did mention that he would ruin your life, Potter," muttered the Death Eater, which was of course no news flash to Harry. "No specifics honestly, now let me down and let me go."

Blaise let the Death Eater down, rather roughly, causing him to crash down hard. Quickly, Harry aimed a spell to his opponent's throat and the Death Eater clutched his throat, as his windpipe began to close, as the Death Eater suffocated to death. Quite frankly, Harry had little time to think of an elaborate demise for this nameless, faceless Death Eater.

"Now what?" prompted Blaise as Harry seemed to have a rather distracted look in his eyes. "Harry?"

"We go, but tread lightly," said Harry in a weary voice, thinking that he should have brought some back up, but decided not to dwell on the matter any further. "Blaise, I can't say enough to be ready for anything and everything."

"I know, we could be making a mistake but it really should be my mistake to make," remarked Blaise. "If you want to turn around..."

"No, Blaise, I'm coming, besides I might get a chance to go another round with Riddle," commented Harry, but a part of him did not want to go to Godric's Hollow. However, Harry refused to give into it, he would have to face the past, the sight that his parents were viciously murdered.

"You know he did this on purpose," stated Blaise and Harry nodded. "Are you sure?"

"Positive, I'm not going to let one of my friends walk into a situation alone and get herself killed," replied Harry in a neutral voice. "Now hold onto my arm, we need to apparate, there and unless you're withholding something, you can't do it."

"No, I have to wait to learn how to Apparate when I come of age like other normal people," said Blaise, before she grabbed Harry's arm quickly and the two disappeared from the Zabini mafia headquarters to right outside Godric's Hollow.

"We're here and you can let go of my arm now, Blaise," commented Harry and Blaise quickly let go of Harry's arm.

“Sorry Harry, I’m not used to Apparating like that,” said Blaise in a neutral voice, as he looked around the village, which had fallen into despair in recent years. “I hear at one point this was one of the most beautiful villages in the entire world, but now, in recent years, it’s turned into a dilapidated mess.”

“Almost fifteen years,” corrected Harry with a far off look in his eyes before he coughed. “The park should be around here somewhere.”

“Up there I think, right across from your parent’s house the Death Eater said,” replied Blaise, as the two walked of the street, most of the homes still looked fairly well maintained, despite the hard times the village went onto but the final home, on the end of the street, was reduced mostly to a pile of wreckage, burn marks on the sections of walls that remained standing.

Harry stepped over, it was surreal, he had not even seen pictures, but he knew this was the place he lived, for fifteen months of his life, perhaps with a few notable exceptions, the only happy fifteen months of Harry’s life. Quickly, he moved over, a silvery glint having caught Harry’s eye. It was a picture frame, buried in the ashes, and Harry bent over to pick it up.

It was a picture frame and inside was a slightly torn picture of a toddler version of Harry, being held by his mother, no doubt not too long before Voldemort come calling. Harry suspected that his father might have been in the torn section of the picture, but that piece was lost in time. He stared at the picture, transfixed.

“Harry?” prompted Blaise as she looked over Harry’s shoulder, but Harry seemed to not hear her, so Blaise leaned forward and caught sight of the picture. “Your Mum, Harry?”

“Mm hmm,” replied Harry in an absent minded tone of voice.

“She’s pretty, she has your eyes after all,” offered Blaise calmly but Harry still seemed to be deep in thought. “And most likely a better mother than mine, as I doubt she would have tried to turn you into a girl.”

"No she wouldn't have," replied Harry coolly, as he placed the photo in his pocket. "The past, it's the past..."

"Harry are you okay?" asked Blaise in a concerned voice but Harry shook his head. "You should have never come here, it's my fault."

"No it isn't," argued Harry, the urge to dig through the rubble for more links to the past very tempting, but Harry decided against it. Only fools dwelled on dreams. He would not be ruled by any emotion. "Let's go."

Harry walked towards the park, as if nothing had happened, with Blaise following closely behind. Blaise felt Harry could give most of the Slytherins a lesson on how not to show any emotion, as he walked through the gates and at that moment, a scruffy looking young man with a gun rushed up towards Harry and Blaise.

"You two, don't move and give me all your money!" shouted the mugger but Harry just raised his eyebrow in amusement, before he withdrew a larger gun and pointed it at the mugger.

"Mine's bigger," commented Harry before he shot the mugger right in the chest, dropping him dead. The mugger hit the ground, as Harry levitated the criminal up into the air, before dropping his body over the fence on the other side of the park, complete with a conveniently placed sign that said "BEWARE: ROTTWEILERS". Harry dropped the would be criminal over the fence and the sound of ripping flesh could be heard.

"Remind me to never piss you off," said Blaise as her eyes widened as she heard the fate of the mugger, as Harry put his gun away. "Now, we need to find my father, that maze should be around here somewhere I'd imagine."

"You'd be right, Blaise," answered Harry, as a large maze was in the center of the park, the only thing in the park that had not looked like it had degraded past the point of repair, but Harry stepped forward, in an attempt to open up the entrance of the maze, but it remained shut, even in an unlocking charm proved useless. Harry was about to shoot the door down, but a cold high voice that seemed to come out of nowhere, projected through the air around them.

"You will find that only I can allow you access to the maze," commented Voldemort. "Years ago, the Ministry of Magic had tentative plans to reinstate the Triwizard Tournament but those plans were shelved once the Goblet of Fire was stolen. Now a maze was to be the final task, but as you'll find out soon enough, I've made some rather notable improvements. Now while the Triwizard Cup was in the center of the maze, a much different prize is in the center of the maze."

"Dad," whispered Blaise in a terrified voice.

"Indeed, your father put up quite the struggle, he had a few defenses around his building that proved to be a minor setback, but even a paranoid delusional crackpot such as him could not even keep Lord Voldemort out," taunted Voldemort in his most chilling voice. "You two will enter the maze and test out all the additions I've put in than. Thanks to Barone, I can ill-afford to send any Death Eaters to do so, because of the lethal complications within."

"I'm no lab rat Riddle!" shouted Harry and Blaise nodded in agreement, as she refused to be manipulated to do Voldemort's dirty work.

"Actually I insist, you two will run the maze or I trust you, being among the top students of Hogwarts, are familiar with the dark beast called the Nundu," commented Voldemort.

"A dark creature that resembles a leopard that's breath has been known to wipe out entire villages," answered Blaise.

"Ten points to Slytherin, Miss Zabini," hissed Voldemort softly. "Now, I've synthesized a mixture that is quite similar to the breath of the Nundu. It's just as lethal but the misery is a bit more prolonged."

Voldemort paused, to let the full nature of his scheme set in to the two teenagers outside.

"Of course, there is no need for you to run the maze Potter, Miss Zabini can do so on her own," replied Voldemort. "Of course, she won't get too far, as I believe we may be among the few alive who are capable of succeeding the perils within alone."

“Fine Riddle, I’ll play your game, for now,” replied Harry in a defeated tone.

“There was no doubt in my mind that you would Potter,” replied Voldemort nastily. “Now before you enter the maze, I need you to place your wands down and leave them outside the maze.”

Blaise and Harry looked at each other, it was obvious that Voldemort was trying to stack the deck as much as possible.

“Remember the Prophecy Riddle,” warned Harry.

“I do, I’m utterly confident of your abilities to survive, Potter, but whether it’s in one piece, it remains to be seen,” commented Voldemort in a chilling tone. “I feel that the assessment of how well my additions for the maze will work would be best without wands, so drop them, or Boss Zabini dies a slow and agonizing death.”

Blaise pulled out her wand and let it drop to the ground. Harry briefly considered telling Voldemort where he could stick that demand, but he removed his wand, letting it linger between his fingers, before letting it drop to the ground. He already regretted doing so, but Voldemort held all the cards and if Harry wanted to find out what he was up to, he had to play the game. Harry was thankful the he knew enough wandless magic to hold his own, along with a few other tricks, but Blaise always seemed to struggle with wandless magic, the others had caught on quicker and it took her much longer to learn each spell.

“Now you may enter,” prompted Voldemort, as the doors vanished, and Blaise and Harry walked inside, the door vanishing behind them. “Oh and did I mention you only have thirty minutes to locate Boss Zabini?”

Harry ignored Voldemort as he looked around, it was obvious that this was nothing like the maze that Harry had to run in his fourth year the first time around.

“All these doors, and how do we know we’re not going to go around in circles?” asked Blaise.

"We can't," said Harry darkly.

"Well, we can't just stand around here bitching about it, let's try the scientific process to pick which door to choose," replied Blaise. "Eenie, Meanie, Miney, Moe."

Blaise pointed to the door, and Harry motioned for her to step aside, so he could move through first, walking down a large stone corridor, where he did not know. She followed close behind, as Harry tensely stopped, before he bent down and removed his shoe. Quickly Harry tossed the shoe forward and several dozen darts shot from the wall, as Blaise let out a breath she had been holding in.

"Exactly how did you know?" asked Blaise but Harry just walked forward and picked up several of the darts, before pocketing them.

"Explain later, need to move forward," said Harry in one breath as he moved forward, with Blaise following him. "Let's try this way."

"Works for me, I have no better ideas," replied Blaise, as she followed Harry down the corridor that seemed deserted. As they stepped inside, Harry was lifted right off the ground and found himself suspended in mid air. Blaise was also pulled off the ground as both of them were spinning out of control in mid air. "Now what?"

"Anti-gravity charm, combined with a vacuum spell," explained Harry as his eyes grew wide, as there were sharp looking knives that were spinning at an insane speed in mid air, right towards where Harry and Blaise were being sucked right towards.

"REDUCTO!" shouted Blaise, as Harry did the same thing silently, but the magic just seemed to be absorbed by the knives and rather caused them to spin faster, creating a larger vacuum effect.

Harry reached forward, in an attempt to grab onto the wall, but it heated up, blistering his hands, as he saw that Blaise was just inches away. Quickly, Harry pulled out his gun and shot at the rotating knives, blasting them back into the wall and causing them to spin through the wall. An exit was created, as Blaise disappeared through, with Harry following, and seconds later, they hit the ground with a

thud. Blaise pulled herself up, her hair looking even more messed up than Harry's.

"Good thing you thought to shoot those things out, rather than use magic, otherwise Voldemort would have to be scraping us off the wall," said Blaise, as she stepped forward, before cringing at a sign over three doors. "Great, hieroglyphics, I suppose you don't know how to read this, Harry?"

"No, but I do know a good translating spell," answered Harry as he waved his hand, a circular golden orb appearing over the Egyptian script, rearranging it into English letters. "We're on the right track and one of these doors is the shortest way to the center of the maze, the other two have mortal peril behind them."

"Yes but which one is it?" asked Blaise and Harry shrugged, but took a few tentative steps towards the center door, with Blaise following behind him, as the door swung open, allowing them entrance and quickly, the door shut behind them. "That door shut too abruptly for my liking."

Harry looked down, as they were on a large plank over a body of water, the plank vanished bit by bit, as they saw what lurked below. A pair of jaws snapped from below, as several crocodiles swam below.

"What kind of nutcase puts crocodiles in a maze?" asked Blaise in a mortified tone of voice.

"Voldemort," answered Harry casually, as he looked down, before he reached into his pocket and pulled out a small cubed shape object, that quickly enlarged to reveal a broomstick, and as the platform was halfway vanished, before Harry mounted it as Blaise stood there, dumbstruck. "Well, what are you waiting for? Climb on"

Blaise did as she was told, as she mounted Harry's broomstick, grabbing onto the back of Harry's neck for leverage, as Harry rose up, just as the platform completely disappeared, as Harry ducked his head slightly.

“Brace yourself,” cautioned Harry, as bolted forward at the speed of light, causing Blaise to scream and instantly, Harry managed to crash through the wall, right back into the corridor where they had come.

“Never do that again without warning me!” yelled Blaise, as she dusted herself off, pulling herself to her feet.

“Hey, I told you to brace yourself,” remarked Harry.

“Fifteen minutes,” announced the voice of Lord Voldemort mockingly.

“Left door?” suggested Harry and Blaise nodded, still looking a bit annoyed at the stunt that Harry had pulled involving crashing at the wall. He could have broken every bone in his body, but the left door swung open, as they walked down the corridor but Harry stopped as they reached other set of doors that forked off. “Blaise, don’t talk for a minute, I need to concentrate, try something different.”

Blaise looked curious, forgetting her earlier annoyance but said nothing, as Harry closed his eyes, concentrating, hoping this would work.

“Left,” said Harry abruptly, as he turned, with Blaise following him down the corridor, surprisingly meeting nothing, as they reached another set of doors, four of them, with roman numerals etched on the top of them. “Door number three.”

Harry led the way, with no questions from Blaise, as they were running out of time to save her father. They went through several more sets of doors, with Harry calling out where they should go and luckily, they met nothing other than a few randomly placed curses that Harry was able to counteract with no problem at all. At the end, they skidded to a stop, in front of a large Golden Sphinx, one thing that remained consistent.

“Greetings, you dunderheads have nearly reached the center of the maze,” commented the Sphinx dryly. “But to move further, you must answer my riddle, answer wrongly, and you shall be destroyed.”

“Give me the riddle,” prompted Harry.

“Three men are on a boat with four cigarettes, but no matches,” said the Sphinx mysteriously. “How do they smoke?”

Blaise motioned Harry over, before she suggested her guess to him in a hushed voice.

“It’s obvious, if they were wizards, they would have used a fire spell to light them,” suggested Blaise, but Harry shook his head in disagreement, wishing that Hermione was here.

“But what if they’re Muggles?” asked Harry. “Wait a minute, I get it now, it’s a play on words.”

Harry turned to the Sphinx, who stood there, with a bored expression etched on its face.

“They threw one cigarette overboard to make the boat a cigarette lighter,” replied Harry and the Sphinx stepped aside, allowing both Blaise and Harry access, but Blaise wrinkled her nose up.

“I get it now, that was an absolutely cheesy play on words,” said Blaise as they moved forward, through one final doorway, but on a small table, there were four cigarettes. “Cute.”

At that moment, the cigarettes magically lit and a sinister orange light began to fill the chamber.

“Not cute,” commented Harry darkly as the cigarettes began to morph into what could only be described as fire demons. “Voldemort doesn’t do cute.”

Harry dodged a jet of fire from one of his newly found foes, it scorching the ground beneath him.

“Okay Harry, you’re smart, what are those blasted things?” demanded Blaise as she managed a weak wandless water charm that had little effect on her opponent.

“Heliopaths!” yelled Harry suddenly, as he sent a water charm of his own at one of the fire demons, achieving a slightly better result than Blaise.

"You mean one of those lunatic things that Luna was going on about that her father writes about!" shouted Blaise, as she just barely avoided having a hole burned right through her both by the heliopath and the stern look that Harry was giving her. "Don't get me wrong, I like Luna, but she's a bit out there at times..."

"So?" asked Harry defensively, as he managed to maneuver himself to allow two Heliopaths to shoot fireballs at each other, a stupid move in hindsight as it only seemed to strengthen the power of the Heliopaths. It was only by luck that they managed to dodge the assaults of their super powered dark foes, who seemed to only feed off the heat in the air, growing stronger yet.

"One minute!" announced Voldemort, that high cold voice taunting both of them.

"Blaise put a bubble headed charm up, I have an idea," said Harry suddenly, kicking himself for not coming up with this solution sooner and Blaise hastened to do so, as the Bubble Headed Charm was one charm that she managed without a wand.

Once he had placed a bubble headed charm on himself, Harry waved his wand, a black circle around the chamber they were battling, as the Heliopaths stopped in their tracks. An inhumane scream could be heard, as the flames of the Heliopaths began to extinguish, as they regressed back to their cigarette forms.

"One question, how?" asked Blaise wordlessly as Harry slumped forward, weakened by the highly advanced wandless magic he did, but he managed to stand up by the sheer force of will.

The door sprung open, leading the way to the center of the maze, as Harry turned to Blaise.

"I used a spell that removed all the oxygen from this room," said Harry in a weak voice, as he held onto the wall for support, as he regained his bearings, before they moved inside and Blaise saw her father, chained to a chair, looking rather weak and Harry's eyes widened, as his hand looked rather rotted, as if had been dead for quite some time.

“Daddy!” yelled Blaise as she rushed forward, but Harry had grabbed her arm, as the door slammed shut behind them.

“That’s not him,” warned Harry, as the chest of the faux Boss Zabini burst open, filling the chamber with a sickening yellow vapor.

“Impressive detective work Potter, Miss Zabini would have been vaporized on impact had she touched my transfigured Inferius booby trap,” commented the cold voice of Voldemort. “Of course, your Bubble Headed charms will last but only for mere moments, before my synthesized Nundu breath eats right through them and then causes your lungs to spontaneously combust.”

Harry was already light headed, but something that Voldemort said had given him a back handed clue, in his own egotistical way. Quickly, Harry levitated the body, motioning for Blaise to stand back and Harry banished quickly right into the wall, completely vaporizing the four walls around the center chamber of the maze. Quickly, Harry leapt over where the wall once stood, careful not to touch any part of the floor that the wall once stood. Blaise copied his movements and once again, the high cold voice of Voldemort taunted them from afar.

“Quick thinking Potter, it is a shame that you did not join me when I gave you the chance,” remarked Voldemort. “Of course, perhaps you are much older and wiser now, you can see the benefits of joining me, in fact both of you would be useful to the right cause.”

“Go suck a lemon!” shouted Harry and Blaise in unison, before they looked at each other and looked amused in spite of the situation.

“So be it,” replied Voldemort coldly and the next thing Harry and Blaise knew, the floor vanished. Quickly, they slid down a large incline that seemed to stretch for several miles below ground.

Quickly, they landed in a large dungeon that was covered in immense amounts of fog. Blaise pulled herself up followed by Harry and the means which they had arrived vanished as soon as they hit bottom. Harry tensed up suddenly, he could feel them, they were near.

“They’re coming,” whispered Harry in a hushed voice and certainly enough, several Dementors made their way down the hallway, gliding

right towards the group, their skeletal hands outstretched, their rattling breath taunting them, as really bad memories came up in Harry's mind and to say that the Dementors had a lot to work with now was an understatement to say the least. "Blaise...Patronus...before...we...collapse."

"Expecto Patronum!" yelled Blaise weakly, but only a few light strands of vapor appeared, before she collapsed to the ground, as Harry dug for a happy memory in his mind, one that he tried to keep buried deep inside, as he felt by bringing it to his consciousness, he would be getting his hopes up.

"EXPECTO PATRONUM!" yelled Harry as a large bright silver stag burst from midair right at the Dementors, backing them off ever so slightly but wandless magic was not without a price, as Harry collapsed to the ground, completely exhausted from doing so much high powered wandless magic in too short of a time and the Patronus slowly vanished, allowing the Dementors to slowly advance forward.

Harry looked up weakly. He heard her screams just before she was murdered before his eyes in his mind, before Harry collapsed to the ground from overexposure to the Dementors.

Voldemort stepped into the picture, as he looked at the unconscious form of Harry Potter, as he gave a slight shudder, but offered no further movement. The boy needed to be prepared for the next phase of the plan that would systematically destroy his reputation, along with putting Voldemort in full power of the Ministry of Magic and before too long, the world.

And that ends that earlier than expected chapter, with three more to go. I have no clue when the next chapter will be. My schedule will be rather wacky for the next couple of months, but I'm aiming to get this story done by the end of June. And yes, there is a slight chance there will be a sequel, the premise that might be slightly disturbing to some readers, but you won't see one word of it until it's completely written.

Chapter Twenty Three: Face to Face

It was September the First, right before her sixth year at Hogwarts, and to say Hermione's mind was as far away from Hogwarts as possible was an understatement to say the least. Harry had been missing for over seven weeks and despite the fact that people were looking, through every possible avenue, every possible lead, nothing turned up. This was kept from the Ministry of Magic, they had no idea that Harry was gone, the official story that they had been fed was that Harry had left to train on an undisclosed island to prepare for the inevitable battle with Voldemort. Hermione had demanded to be informed immediately had anything occurred, but her Uncle Antonio said that the entire organization was working around the clock. There was nothing to indicate that Harry was dead, but there was also nothing to reassure Hermione that her best friend was alive.

"Hermione?" asked Luna quietly as she entered the compartment, with Neville following closely behind. "I'd thought Harry and Blaise would be with you."

"Luna, did you read the Daily Prophet?" asked Neville. "It says that Harry's gone to an uncharted island to train, so he can finish off You-Know-Who again."

"No, I never read that paper," commented Luna. "But I did hear about that, I'm sure it will fool most of the Wizarding World, but now that I think about it, it was obviously a planted story to cover up something else. So, what's the deal with Harry?"

Hermione remained silent, but her silence was all the confirmation that Luna felt she needed.

"Harry's missing," prodded Luna perceptively and Hermione just nodded in a distracted manner.

"Yes, he must have gone out and done something really stupid, he should know better after last time!" snapped Hermione, taking Neville aback, but Luna just stood there, calm.

"Please don't talk about Harry like that, Hermione," said Luna calmly. "Harry's far from stupid, his brain just works on a different level than

most of us can comprehend and that can lead to some rather unfortunate situations.”

“And I’m sure you have him all figured out,” responded Hermione in a bit of an agitated tone.

“No, not entirely,” admitted Luna. “I have a general idea though, but he’ll get out whatever situation he got into.”

“Yeah he will, after what happened during first year, that proved that Harry can handle whatever You-Know-Who throws at him,” added Neville.

“There was a rumor that Blaise’s father went missing too,” said Hermione, suddenly, remembering it for the first time, she brushed it aside because she was so worried about Harry. “And if I know Blaise, she’d go after him and she might have been captured.”

“So you think this is connected somehow?” asked Luna.

“No I don’t think that,” replied Hermione shortly. “I know.”

The Great Hall was filled with the usual amount of chatter, as far as ninety five percent of the Wizarding World knew, there was no reason to believe that something was wrong with Harry. As for Blaise, she was not that all liked with most of the Slytherin house, as she did not hold the same “all Mudbloods should be tortured and killed” attitudes as most of the house, so the majority of the school paid her absence little mind, other than the teachers of course.

Flamel rose to his feet, from the expression on his face, there was no reason to believe that this was not a normal year.

“Students and faculty, welcome to another year at...” started Flamel but the ancient Headmaster and legendary wizard was cut off by a loud sound that could be heard through both Hogwarts and Hogsmeade, that shook the entire Great Hall and perhaps all of Hogwarts. Another powerful impact, that shook the entire school. “Prefects, get all the students to the Common Rooms, to safety, no time to dawdle, someone is trying to break down the wards.”

It was a sea of insanity, as prefects, along with the Head Boy and Head Girl, began to round up the students, as many explosions could be heard from outside.

"This way, hurry, come on!" shouted one of the prefects in a frantic voice.

"What's going on?" asked Sirius as another loud explosion rattled the Great Hall, causing several students to fall.

"No time to explain now, everyone work with me to attempt to reinforce the protections, to drive out the intruders!" yelled Flamel in a commanding voice, as all of the teachers to line up, pointing their wands, but before they could use the proper spell work, each teacher was blasted backwards, landing hard from the backlash of magic from their attempts to seal the wards shut.

"It's almost like someone has taken control of the magic around the school," said Professor Flitwick.

"No, I doubt so, that's supposed to be impossible," argued McGonagall in a skeptical voice but Flamel shook his head.

"No, very possible, they would have to have a detailed building schematic on the wards around the castle and the power to break through them," said Flamel, and the teachers looked taken aback at this grave piece of information. "You'd be surprised of what you can get a hold of when you wave enough gold under the noses of those goblins, but that's not important right now, the protections must be reinforced before the protections are completely broken down."

"I'd save you the trouble Flamel," hissed the cold voice of Voldemort that echoed through the entire school. "You teachers have been completely locked out and out of your hands."

"If he's got the wards, we're at his mercy," muttered McGonagall.

"Hardly, I have little time to take control of Hogwarts, rather a capable individuals, my newest follower and my second in command, has taken control of your school," announced Voldemort. "You have but precious minutes to surrender the school to him or you will face

annihilation. In fact, a small sample of the power he holds over the school is about to take place right now. Now, as much as I'd like to stay and chat, I have the fall of the Ministry to oversee."

Voldemort's voice disappeared and several of the suits of armor around the Great Hall came to life. One of the suits raised its hand and a jet of blue light flew across the Great Hall, blowing the Slytherin Table into mere toothpicks, before the suits of armor quickly advanced on the teachers.

A large jet of orange light was blocked by Flitwick and reflected directly back at the suit of armor. Quickly, he dodged around, and a jet of white light flew, ripping it to shreds. On the other end, McGonagall managed to blast back the suit that she was fighting. The suit continued to advance on the Transfiguration professor, but she slowed it with a rust acceleration spell. Another wave of her wand and she transfigured the suit into a swarm of pigeons, taking it out of commission.

Sirius dodged around, as the helmet sent dangerous looking jets of green light towards him. Remus attempted to get behind armor, but it turned around. A blast of silver light went right at Remus, who dodged it, before Sirius and Remus fired blasting charms from either side, blasting the suit of armor, as Sprout had magically wrapped a plant vine around it, crushing the suit into scrap metal.

Flamel was left with the last suit and the old wizard moved surprisingly fast for his age, dodging the suit. He flicked his wrist back and forth three times. The suit of armor began to vibrate at the speed of light, before it abruptly fell apart.

"It may be prudent for us just to surrender," said Narcissa, as the typical Slytherin, the Potions Mistress stayed off to the side, carefully surveying the fight and not attracting any attention.

"It may be prudent, but we're condemning these children if we do so," argued McGonagall defensively.

"Besides, we don't know who this new follower of Voldemort is," added Remus. "He's obviously dangerous and extremely powerful if he took control of Hogwarts."

“Yeah, I gathered that much, Moony,” said Sirius, as another explosion, as they all walked out towards the entrance hall, where the wooden doors were beginning to splinter open, before they completely were blown off the hinges, a burst of raw magical energy being release in the Great Hall. It took the collective efforts of all of the teachers and their shield charms to avoid being blow into smithereens. Off to the side, there were scorch marks on the castle walls where the magical explosion.

The dust began to clear and a figure began to walk towards them took all of the teachers aback. Standing in front of them, dressed in full Death Eater robes, without a mask on, his green eyes showing no hint of emotion, was none other than Harry Potter.

Right by the staircase leading to the Ravenclaw Common Room, Luna and Hermione, among others, looked down with absolutely mortified looks on their face, as when they were in the middle to getting to their Common Room, the staircase just vanished. Needless to say, several students fell, suffering a variety of severe injuries, depending on the height they fell. A few injured managed to pull themselves to their feet, but many were not so lucky, when the staircase reappeared right on top of them, crushing them instantly, killing dozens.

“This is so horrible, I want to go home,” wailed a second year girl, as the walls around them began to flash a multitude of colors.

“Don’t panic anyone,” said a seventh year prefect named Lucy Scrimgeour, the daughter of the current head of the Auror office, in a firm voice and the only Ravenclaw prefect not to perish in the stair malfunction. “Everything’s going to be okay...”

“How can you say that?” snapped another student, a fifth year. “My little sister was down there when the staircase reappeared, she’s dead, nothing’s going to be okay, I hope the bastard who did this receives the Dementor’s Kiss!”

“Inside the Common Room, we should be safe in there,” ordered Lucy, as she turned to face the Eagle Knocker on the door. However, instead of asking a question to allow them entrance, the knocker began to glow, causing a blinding blue light to fill the hallway, before

a solid blast impacted the prefect in the chest and caused her to fly over the banisters. Several students watched her land in horror, before they screamed in absolute horror, running around.

“QUIET!” yelled Luna loudly, and they stopped suddenly at the surprisingly forceful voice from the normally quiet and reserved Luna. “Now, it’s obvious that running around like a chicken with your head cut off isn’t going to do anyone any good and might hurt more people. So, I would highly suggest not touching anything but the floor you’re standing on. Perhaps you haven’t figured it out, but something is rather off about the magic flowing within the walls of Hogwarts.”

The students remained still and rather quiet, as Luna turned to Hermione, who seemed to be contemplating something horrific over in her mind.

“Harry...no surely not,” muttered Hermione under her breath, the entire thought was absurd but could Harry have cracked, frustrated with his inability to defeat Voldemort successfully as quickly he wanted to, this second time around?

“There’s no easy answer,” said Luna calmly. “The events of the last couple of months, the last couple of years even have been rather peculiar, even for me.”

In the Entrance Hall, Harry advanced on the Great Hall, all of the teachers in shock, but Sirius was finally the one who found his voice.

“Harry, what in the hell do you think you’re doing?” demanded Sirius, but Harry just regarded him with casual indifference, before responding.

“Serving the will of the Dark Lord and exterminating all of you filthy blood traitors,” said Harry cruelly. “It seems that we are at a bit of a stand still, as you are unsure whether or not to attack me. Well let me help you make on your minds.”

A loud sonic vibration spell ripped through the entire entrance hall, the shield charm just barely able to keep the brunt of the spell back, but it completely drove the teachers backwards and into the Great Hall, all of the chairs and tables over turned.

"We have to attack him, perhaps if we all work together, we can subdue him," suggested McGonagall, who was rather felt rather uneasy about having to attack the son of two of her favorite students, but at that moment, McGonagall was blasted backwards and Harry vanished.

"He's using school's magic to cloak himself," said Flamel as he fired a yellow orb into the air, that slightly revealed the outline of Harry, before several more spells were blasted, all of them reflected back at their attackers with the greatest of ease, as Harry reappeared, towards the back of the Great Hall, a rather bored expression etched on his face. Flitwick sent a stasis charm right at Harry, in an attempt to catch him off guard, but it was fired right back at him. Flitwick gave a small yelp, before he fell to the ground with a thud.

"STUPEFY!" yelled a set of voices, as many stunning spells hit Harry in the chest, but Harry didn't even flinch, before he waved his arm, a gust of wind knocking the teachers back. McGonagall pulled herself back to her feet and proceeded to quickly transfigure a chair into a bear. The bear growled before it lunged at its prey, but Harry spun his arm. Golden circles materialized in the air and sliced directly through the bear, transforming it into confetti.

Harry vanished once again into thin air, before the Great Hall began to shoot multi color bolts of magic at the teachers.

"And exactly how did the founders think that putting in something that allows the Great Hall to shoot magic would be a good idea?" demanded Sirius, as he blocked a slicing spell from the chair, before a castration hex came from the ceiling, that Sirius also managed to avoid being hit with.

"Suspect it was a defense mechanism of some sort," grunted Lupin, as a bone crushing curse struck him in the back of the leg, dropping him to the ground.

"Try and figure out a way to contain this!" bellow Flamel, who was afraid that the entire castle would come crashing down on them from the heavy amount of raw magical power. "I'll deal with Mr. Potter!"

“Focus a shield charm on the ceiling!” shouted McGonagall. “That might contain most of the blast, to allow us find a more permanent solution.”

Flamel walked down the corridors, wand drawn, ready for anything, it was too quiet for his own good and he quickly turned around, before blocking an attempted puncturing spell, aimed directly at his heart as Harry quickly materialized to face Flamel.

“Why, Mr. Potter?” asked Flamel. “Because you are the absolutely last person I’d think that would side with Riddle.”

“The Harry Potter you know will no longer be a concern any longer,” commented Harry dryly. “He was a weak, insolent child, who could not match up to the power of the Dark Lord. I will obliterate anyone who stands in the way of the Dark Lord and erase the undesirable elements tied to the name of Potter.”

A jet of blue light scanned Harry but Flamel frowned as it came up negative, before he was caught off guard when he was lifted off the ground and throw halfway across the corridor. Harry charged in, with an attempted slicing spell, but Flamel blocked it.

“No Polyjuice,” muttered Flamel, before he shot thick metal ropes at Harry wrapping them around them, but they burst into flames seconds later, with Harry freed and in the speed of light, Harry was on the other side of Flamel. Flesh rotting curse was blocked by Flamel, before Flamel sent a mild coma curse back at Harry, who blocked it as well. “So what has Voldemort done to you?”

Harry responded with a high cold laugh that caused Flamel to be slightly unnerved and it did take a lot to freak him out, given that he had seen much in his six hundred and some odd years alive. He did not have much time to reflect on this manner before Harry blasted a jet of grey magic, revealing demonic looking ravens. The ravens dove right at Flamel, beaks pointed right towards his eyes but the six hundred year old plus wizard had a counter measure, jabbing his wand, transfiguring the ravens into harmless stuffed animals. A conjured jet of acid propelled itself right at Flamel. At the last split second, Flamel redirected it right towards a tapestry, burning a hole right through it.

“Winded, Nick,” taunted Harry. “I can run through everyone, both student and teacher, in this pathetic school without breaking a sweat...”

Flamel blasted Harry right in the chest with a dark shade of blue light that caused him to smash right through the wall into the next corridor.

“Sadly, it seems you’ve succumbed to the downfall of many before you, talking when you should be about to kill me,” said Flamel, but Harry calmly walked through the hole in the wall, casually brushing the dust off of his shoulders, before he coolly pulled his arm back, before making a light punching motion. Flamel staggered back, it was almost like he was hit right in the chest with a blunt object. In a half of a blink of an eye, Harry positioned himself to the left of Flamel, before platinum spirals shot right at Flamel. The unblockable magical disruption spell, a spell rarely used because of the extreme power needed to pull it off and the small chance of fatal magical fatigue to the caster.

Flamel dropped to the ground, unable to defend himself with magic. Harry showed little mercy, as he magically pushed Flamel directly into the wall and seconds later, Devil’s Snare burst out of the wall, wrapping around the ancient wizard.

“Feel free to expire at your leisure, I have a few loose ends to tie up,” said Harry casually, before he walked off, as Flamel did his best to relax until his magic returned but there was no indication whether it would return due to the volatile nature of the spell.

Right in front of one of the headquarters for the Barone mob, large thunderous foot steps could be heard, as several mobsters exited the building, as they saw a car get crushed like a can underneath the foot of a giant that approached the building.

“Aim all of your guns at that thing, all hit him at once, maybe we can drop him!” suggested one of the mobsters, and the others raised their guns, assaulting the giant that was approaching with a heavy barrage of bullet. This did not slow the thirty foot creature down, rather it just enraged him. The giant scooped up a van in its bulldozer like hand before it tossed it right at the headquarters, breaking it through the wall. The mobsters scattered, retreating, as the giant smashed its

way through, slowly obliterating the building, reducing the large structure to dust!

The giant reached up and viciously ripped a power line down, before he swung it recklessly like a rope, sending sparks dangerously every direction, starting an electrical fire in the city, as tanks rolled into the picture, but the giant scooped up the tank, before it threw it halfway across the city, but the tanks fired several more missiles at the giant, backing it down.

“Hit them with everything you’ve got!” shouted a loud, booming voice. “Drop that thing to the ground.”

More missiles impacted the giant, with the large creature swinging its beefy fist, smashing several more buildings to the ground, before several large canisters were shot right to the foot of the giant. The giant stomped on one but they all released a grey cloud of gas. The beast gave a bellow, before its knees began to buckle, the collective effort of the twelve canisters taking it down. The beast fell backwards and when it hit the ground, the city and several others nearby shook, the equivalent of a high magnitude earthquake rocking everything in the city, obliterating several buildings, along with causing countless casualties. The dangerous rampaging beast was put down, but at a rather high cost.

Minister Weaver waved over a team of Aurors, who were reinforcing the barrier within the Ministry of Magic. Most of the non-Auror employees had been evacuated just barely, but the Death Eaters posed a very real threat to the Wizarding World should they take control of the Ministry headquarters.

“Keep fighting, we can’t let them in here!” ordered Weaver, as a door began to be magically pushed open, but a pair of Aurors quickly blasted it right back, magically sealing it shut.

“I don’t know how much more we can keep this up,” grunted one of the Aurors. “The other teams have said some of them have poured into the Wizengamot chambers.”

“They have their orders, to try to keep contain them within the chambers,” supplied Scrimgeour. “Although Minister, respectively speaking, the plan to destroy the chambers does seem a little bit...”

“It is, but there is not that much that can be done, we can’t just roll back and allow him to have the Ministry,” said Weaver, but the entire wall was blasted, allowing Death Eaters to pour in but the Aurors quickly remained on the attack. “Lethal force is authorized; stop them at any costs.”

All Ministry law was thrown right out the window, as the Aurors moved in to take out the Death Eaters or at least drive them out, to deliver a blow to the morale of Lord Voldemort’s forces. An unfortunate Auror dropped to Weaver’s side, ripped crudely in half, but there was little time to worry about those who fell. Several more fell, from both sides, as the roof of the Ministry corridors crumbled.

“Scatter!” shouted one of the Death Eaters, as they blasted thick pieces of concrete at the Aurors, some managing to be lucky enough to dive inside offices off to either side. The dust cleared, and the Aurors came back out fighting, as the stalemate continued for quite some time.

“Keep them on the move, if we can get them into the next corridor, they can be trapped with Plan X9,” ordered Scrimgeour and several of the Aurors gasped, that plan was only to be used as a last resort, but the same spell that killed Moody came close to striking the Minister, who was very lucky to be facing off against a wizard with worse aim than Voldemort. The entire wall behind them was blown into oblivion.

A jet of green light impacted one of the Aurors, causing him to flop to the ground, but Scrimgeour signaled for several jagged silver spells to be sent right at the Death Eaters, forcing them to break through the defensive barrier.

“Keep up, don’t stop for anything, even if this corridor caves in on us!” barked Scrimgeour and the Death Eaters were in the corridor. “NOW, QUICKLY!”

An interconnected web of pure raw magic appeared right in the corridor, before it shot outwards in several directions, slicing everything that moved. The Death Eaters were ill equipped to fight this rather new Auror technique, that had the potential to blow the entire Ministry of Magic to bits, scattering it all over Britain. Thankfully, just as the Aurors disappeared, it only just completely blew up the entire west half of the third floor of the Ministry, splattering the blood of many Death Eaters, as they were ripped to shreds.

“Okay, that’s all of them, I think,” said Weaver as he turned to Scrimgeour who nodded, as a silver shape had left them, as they had repositioned themselves in another floor of the Ministry.

“I receiving word that Shacklebolt lead the other team, sealed them in the Wizengamot court room, put a disapparation shield around it, before they set the entire thing on fire, a bit suspect, but the job was done,” answered Scrimgeour and at that moment, an Auror, who had been positioned to monitor all incoming communications in, rushed at them.

“Minister, Head Auror, you really need to hear some of the news that’s reached me, it’s chaos, the Ministry’s going to be cleaning up this mess for months,” commented the Auror in a breathless voice. “Giants have been on a rampage throughout the entire country, Dementors have been sighted in Hogsmeade, and...Harry Potter has attacked Hogwarts.”

“Wait, Potter attacked Hogwarts,” said Weaver. “Are you sure you heard that right?”

“The entire school has gone wonky, sealing everyone inside, suits of armor coming to life, everything, and Potter’s the one behind this, we’ve only been able to hear fragments,” replied the Auror but the wrist band that he had charmed to work on the main Floo connection with the Ministry of Magic began to blink and the wizard rushed inside, to get more grave news yet. “The Muggle Prime Minister is demanding answers, he was nearly attacked by a Muggle strapped down with a bog or whatever those things are that Muggles use to blow things up are called. Another communication, a follow up, said

the Aurors we had stationed there managed to get him out, the Muggle may have been put under the Imperius Curse.”

Chaos reigned, as the Minister stood, thinking quickly, he needed to come up with a workable solution, before the entire country descended into anarchy.

“Ministry of Magic, I must offer you congratulations of defeating a group of rookie Death Eaters,” commented the voice of Lord Voldemort. “Now, for twenty five years, the Ministry of Magic has resisted my power and that cannot go on any longer. Therefore, twenty four hours, the Ministry will surrender control over to me or...well just take a look at the fate of the citizens of Hogsmeade if you want to know what will happen to every city, every village, every town in this entire country. Do not test me, you only have twenty four hours or I turn the Dementors loose on London.”

The Aurors looked at each other, completely speechless at this proclamation.

“Surely, You-Know-Who’s not serious,” said one of the Aurors finally finding his voice.

“We must take every threat seriously,” said Scrimgeour as he turned to his men. “We need to check out this Hogsmeade situation and proceed straight to the school, to investigate these strange reports involving Harry Potter.”

Outside the Ravenclaw Common Room, the Ravenclaws all stood quiet and motionless, almost afraid to move with what had happened so far.

“Help, I’m hurt, is anyone up there?” demanded a very familiar voice and the figure of Harry Potter staggered out from behind a tapestry, causing Hermione to gasp.

“Harry, what happened?” asked Hermione.

“Death Eaters, they attacked me...Hogwarts...” stammered Harry as Hermione rushed down the stairs, but Luna just looked at the figure

down the stairs, her eyes narrowed suspiciously, before she followed Hermione.

"You need to get to the Hospital Wing Harry, it looks like you can barely stand," said Hermione but Harry's eyes snapped up, a malignant look right in Hermione's face, before a slicing charm was aimed right towards Hermione's stomach. Her heightened reflexes from training with Harry had just managed to partially block the spell, but she was knocked off of her feet none the same.

"Naturally, I suspected you fell for that, after all, that trick wasn't in Hogwarts: A History, Mudblood," said Harry coldly, as he knocked Hermione backwards but Luna attempted to come from behind, Harry turned, knocking Luna backwards. "Hello, Luna, nice to see you, I figure I'll have some fun with you but this should keep the Mudblood occupied in the meantime."

A gargoyle came to life and went right after Hermione but Luna took advantage of the momentary distraction of Harry, to send a bone shattering curse right towards the back of Harry's head but Harry turned around and casually deflected her effort. Luna send two more spells but Harry deflected them to the side with the ease.

"Now, Luna, that's no way to treat your friend, trying to hurt me like that," taunted Harry.

"You're not Harry," replied Luna calmly, as Hermione just barely avoided being smashed to bits by the animated gargoyle off to the side and Luna conjured a sharp dagger, before she blasted at Harry, but Harry dodged it. "Therefore, I have no problems hurting you."

Another spell and Harry casually deflected it, but Luna's eyes narrowed.

"Where is he?" demanded Luna, but Harry just calmly blasted her with a banishing charm. Luna struggled to her feet and large bang indicated that she attempted to wrap Harry up with ropes, but Harry calmly flicked his wrist, slicing them. "Tell me, what did Voldemort do to him?"

“Not impressed with the new and improved Harry Potter, Luna?” asked Harry in a bored voice, as Luna attempted to hit him with a magically conjured ball of fire but Harry effortlessly doused it with a jet of cold water. “Maybe you’ll be impressed with this. CRUCIO!”

Luna screamed in agony, it was pain beyond anything she could even imagine feeling. The other Ravenclaws looked down fearfully but Harry turned to them, as Luna dropped to the ground, panting heavily.

“Any of you wish to come down here and stop me, be my guest,” commented Harry as Hermione attempted to blow the gargoyle with a blasting charm but it just continued to go after her. “I’ll have you murdered just like I did the rest of your house mates, and this entire school should they try and stop me.”

A couple of the Ravenclaws made a movement like they were going to do something, but the walls around them began to light up, along with the floor, and they all dropped to the ground, stunned, before Harry turned to Luna.

“Maybe if you get on your knees and beg me, I might keep you as a slave,” said Harry, but another spell by Luna forced Harry to deflect it and he looked at her, a very nasty, spiteful look etched in his cold emerald eyes. “CRUCIO!”

Luna screamed once again, under an immense amount of pain, as the battle between Hermione against the gargoyle had been lead to another hallway. Hermione tripped in her haste to move back and the gargoyle advanced on her, but a large burst of golden light connected with the gargoyle, blowing it to bits. Weakly, she looked up and the last thing she saw was a very familiar figure retreating before she passed out from exhaustion.

Back in the Great Hall, the teachers were beginning to severely weakened, attempting to fight off the raw magic but in the blink of the eye, it stopped. McGonagall looked up, weakly, the entire Great Hall was in ruins, but no more magic had been fired within the walls, with the other teachers also mimicking her.

“I’d suggest we attempt to move out of here, before the defense mechanisms around the Great Hall start up once again,” said

McGonagall, and the other teachers agreed, as they gingerly walked out of the hallway, some barely able to stand because of magical exhaustion.

Luna dropped to the ground, her arms and legs snapped together and Harry stood over her.

"I must admit, you nearly came close to landing a spell on me," replied Harry, as he traced his finger on Luna's cheek, with a bit of a leer on his face, as she was unable to move with the full body bind. "Now, before I put you out your misery, I think I should get a little something out of this, a mere taste of what you would have gotten had you accepted my offer and beg."

Harry reached down, gripping Luna's robes, but a hand on his shoulder roughly spun around. The next thing he knew, a fist impacted his face, staggering him back before a large slash of magic in the air caused him to ricochet all the way down the corridor.

From the shadows stepped, Harry Potter, who calmly waved his wand to undue the full body bind on Luna, before he reached down and helped her back to her feet. Luna got a good look at Harry, his hair more wild and unruly than ever, covered with grime, his hands mucked up, his robes completely tattered, and he held a stolen wand in his hand.

"Okay, Luna?" asked Harry, the real Harry, in a raspy tone of voice.

"Now I am," replied Luna, as she leaned against Harry for support, the after effects of the two Cruciatus Curses still visible, but the figure of the imposter Harry walked up, as if nothing occurred, and he looked at the real Harry, with absolute distaste evident in his eyes.

"The original," commented the fake Harry scornfully, as he stood in front of them, but Harry just stood there, not taking his eyes off of his double.

"Voldemort made a clone of me, through a forgotten and lost ritual, a modified version of what returned him to his brand new body," muttered Harry in an undertone.

“Clone, I’m insulted by your common vernacular,” responded the duplicate. “I am an enhanced replication of you, with all the previous imperfections eliminated. I’m what Muggles might call an upgrade.”

Harry quickly blasted his duplicate backwards, but this only deterred it for a few seconds. Quickly, Harry summoned a suit of armor, before he caused it to slam against the clone, pinning it against the wall.

“Luna, can you walk on your own?” asked Harry and Luna weakly nodded. “You need to get to the hospital wing, help Hermione if you can, she’s in the next corridor over, I’ll meet you there once I finish this thing off.”

Luna staggered forward as quickly as she could manage, before the duplicate blasted the suit of armor off of him. Harry quickly dodged in front of him, shining a super charged light spell in his eyes, impairing his field of vision, but the duplicate was through playing games. Harry found himself blasted backwards by raw magic. Another blast of raw magic sent Harry backwards once again, he felt his chest burn slightly from the impact. His double advanced on him and sent another burst.

“REDUCTO!” yelled Harry and the duplicate laughed at Harry’s poor aim, that was before the floor crumbled from underneath him and the duplicate crashed through below. Pulling himself up, panting heavily, Harry watched as the duplicate pulled himself back up and send a cutting curse. Harry just barely blocked the curse. A tapestry shot off the wall and wrapped around Harry, before it began to squeeze tightly. Harry struggled to breath, as the tapestry grew tighter, as he was about crushed but he managed to free himself and then was banished backwards right towards the side of another staircase.

“Really, this is just pathetic, this is the best that these pathetic Mudbloods and Blood Traitors can hope for to fight the Dark Lord,” said the duplicate with a high cold laugh as he stood over Harry. “It’s quite a shame that I was spawned from this, but eliminating you will ensure that all the imperfections of the past are erased.”

Harry attempted to fight back but he was blasted down the stairs. He just barely managed to ease his fall by turning the stairs into a slide as he came down. The clone watched at the top of the stairs, before

he slid down and Harry was blasted up into the air, knocking over an entire row of suits of armor. Through a haze, Harry spotted a sword having been dislodged from one of the knights.

“You know, all things considered, I thought you’d fight back,” said the clone, as he approached Harry. “I’ll finish you off, and I’ll finish my business with young Luna.”

Harry quickly turned and stabbed the sword directly into the chest of his clone, before he slashed his wand, melting the sword right into the duplicate’s chest. The imposter shrieked out in agony, as Harry quickly reared back his arm and another heavy wave of raw magic, this time from Harry. The duplicate slammed backwards into the wall but much to Harry’s distaste, the imposter continued to move forward. He screwed his eyes shut in concentration, before another blast sent his adversary backwards. Harry magically propelled himself forward, at the speed of light and another blast knocked both versions of Harry through the window, glass flying in every which direction, as they landed right into the ground below, ripples of magic vibrating throughout the air from the impact.

Harry rolled up, completely cut up from the glass, blood dripping from his arms, as his clone calmly sat up, not a scratch on him. The real Boy-Who-Lived was blasted twenty feet up into the air and down, narrowly avoiding landing on his head. Another pair of sickening blasts and Harry crashed into the bleachers off to the side of the Quidditch Field. Harry rolled over, staggering to his feet and his mirror image flicked his wrist. Silver wire coiled itself around Harry, crushing him while simultaneously cutting into his skin. More blood dripped as Harry managed to snap the wire, before he collapsed to the ground, soaked in his own blood. Valiantly, Harry struggled right to his feet but a bone shattering charm impacted his jaw, causing blood to splatter from his mouth from the impact.

“The end comes for you, just think how the Dark Lord will reward me for your utter annihilation,” announced the duplicate, before he waved his hand, healing Harry’s jaw. “Before I finish you off, I want to know one thing. Why do you fight a futile battle?”

“For my friends, for me, quite frankly, if I had the choice, I wouldn’t be fighting Voldemort, but I don’t,” answered Harry, as he clutched his side, barely able to stand. “Now, just one thing, what makes you think you can’t be beaten?”

“The Dark Lord has informed me so,” replied the duplicate in a smug tone but this just caused Harry to laugh, in spite of the situation and all that happened over the past eight weeks. “I hardly think your death would be such a joking matter, unless you’ve finally lost your mind.”

“No, that happened years ago, but the fact remains, you might be hard to beat, but Voldemort would not make someone other than him impossible to beat,” said Harry and the clone looked at him. “Let’s face it, you are a tool, to serve Voldemort’s twisted whims, once you get broken, worn out, or Voldemort just gets bored with you, you will be finished.”

“I’m his most trusted servant!” cried the duplicate. “He told me himself.”

“He’s told everyone that, but it matters little, because he owns you and when he feels your usefulness is outlived, you’ll be done,” said Harry. “With all the power, you are just nothing but a soulless puppet, it’s not like you have any purpose, any thoughts, any dreams, any feelings beyond what Voldemort has programmed into you. You have no heart, no soul, no purpose.”

The duplicate stood, before he angrily blasted Harry backwards. Another blast of light and the top half of Harry’s robes were completely burned off. He staggered to his feet, his chest raw and red. Harry was blasted right in the face and knocked right onto his back. The duplicate was right on top of him and he had conjured a large spear, that was glowing a sinister shade of green.

“You’ll be the one without the heart, you sad, obsolete excuse for a wizard, when I burn right through your chest and slowly pull it out!” thundered the duplicate coldly, as he stood over Harry, his legs spread as he raised the spear high over his head for maximum impact. “Perhaps this should teach you a lesson to quit while you’re ahead.”

“And maybe you should learn not to stand over someone with your legs spread,” spat Harry, before he brought his foot right up, punting the duplicate right in the groin. Even with his heightened tolerance to pain, this tried and tested maneuver had backed the duplicate off and Harry struggled to his feet, with the duplicate attempting to stab Harry once again. A solid stone shield appeared in front of Harry and the spear impacted it, the blast knocking the clone backwards.

The duplicate pulled himself to his feet and Harry dug down deep, to draw magic the likes of which he'd never used before a large vice like construct made of pure magic grasped around the neck of the clone. Harry envisioned his duplicate's neck snapping in the vice and that was followed by a crack, dropping the clone down to the ground. Unfortunately for Harry, a snapped neck was not enough to defeat his mirror enemy, as the duplicate pulled itself back to his feet, its head bent awkwardly to the side.

“DIE YOU SON OF A BITCH!” yelled Harry, his anger at this monster that had his appearance reaching its completely boiling point, as he aimed his wand, before he impacted the clone right in the heart with an organ combustion curse. The clone was lifted off the ground and even Harry was surprised at what happened, almost subconsciously, he began to rotate on the spot, his clone rotating in the air above him, kicking up a large cyclone of wind from high above.

The double circled around, as Harry lost his concentration, staggering backwards, as a large burst of raw magic went off right in the center of the Forbidden Forest. All of the trees ripped from the ground, all the grass on the grounds completely incinerated and the walls on the castle covered in highly disfiguring magical scorch marks. Harry laid flat on his back, not knowing whether or not he was able to move again, but quickly, his fingertips twitched slightly, the feeling slowly coming back to the rest of his body, as by completely by the force of his own will power, Harry pulled himself up to a standing position. With great pain, but somehow, Harry walked his way up to the school, wincing each and every step of the way.

A few hours later, Harry was in Flamel's office, along with Sirius, Remus, Luna, Hermione, and Neville, just completing the account of

when he was captured with Blaise in that doomsday maze and battle with his duplicate.

“So Harry, one thing’s been perplexing me, how exactly did you manage to escape?” asked Sirius, curiously.

“By the skin of my teeth,” said Harry darkly, but he had been forced to acknowledge something that had been buried in the back of mind. “Blaise, on the other hand, wasn’t so lucky.”

“She’s...” stated Hermione and Harry nodded, he had been forced to watch the entire messy ordeal, all the prolonged agony that his friend went through, just so Voldemort could send a demented statement to Harry.

“I just wish, no I should have made her stay and go on my own, in hindsight, it was a trap, it’s so obvious, but at the time, I wasn’t thinking clearly, and now she’s dead,” said Harry in a flat, emotionless tone of voice.

“Oh, and how would you have made her stay, Harry? She would have gone no matter what you said, so how could you stop her?” challenged Hermione. “Stun her and shove her in a broom closet until you got back? I know you feel bad, but at the same time, Blaise chose to go, you were the one who didn’t have to go.”

“Besides, I doubt she would have wanted you to blame yourself for what happened,” added Neville and Harry just sat there, unmoving, he had no energy to argue this point, after what had happened and the door slid open, allowing Flamel entrance, who looked very grim, not to mention rather weak and every bit of his age, plus more, after narrowly surviving his predicament earlier.

“Harry, I’m afraid that things have gotten grimmer, Scrimgeour found out that his daughter was one of the students killed. Needless to say, this inspired him, with the approval of Weaver, has authorized a hunt for you to be brought in, dead or alive, for the slayings of several students within Hogwarts,” said Flamel. “As far as he knows, you’re not here, but he wants to do a full investigation of the school in the morning, to look for anything that else that can be used to bring you. Also, I’m to pass along that two of your buildings were obliterated,

one by a giant and one by a group of Muggles under the Imperius, strapped with explosives.”

“More good news,” remarked Harry in a slightly sarcastic tone of voice. “Did you try to explain to the Ministry about the clone deal or did they chose not to live in reality again?”

“They wouldn’t have listened anyway, as I did not directly listen anything and since the only known witness to seeing the two of you at the same time is Miss Lovegood here, I’m afraid not much can be done,” said Flamel in a tired voice. “I’m sorry Harry.”

“What’s wrong with Luna’s word?” demanded Harry in a defensive voice but Luna grabbed Harry’s hand calmly.

“Harry, I appreciate the support, but I doubt very much the Ministry will believe me because of two things. One, we’re friends and two, who my father is,” commented Luna with a sigh, as she correctly interpreted the disgusted look on Harry’s face. “Yes, I suppose it would be rubbish.”

“There’s more, isn’t there?” prompted Remus and Flamel nodded gravely.

“Right around the time of the duplicate’s attack on Hogwarts, Voldemort staged an attack on the Ministry and then gave them an ultimatum, either surrender the Ministry to him or everyone will suffer the same fate as those in Hogsmeade,” informed Flamel.

“All of them were given the Dementor’s Kiss, every man, woman, and child in Hogsmeade, I saw the carnage when I arrived at the village,” inputted Harry. “Judging by the amount of fog, there were more Dementors taking part in the attack then you could imagine, I doubt the even my full powered Patronus charm could hold off that many, the villages didn’t have a chance.”

“The Ministry’s considering accepted Voldemort’s proposal, because he’s hinted that London’s next and if everyone there is kissed, they feel that this might be a cataclysmic event the likes which the Wizarding World has never seen,” said Flamel and the entire group looked taken aback.

"The Ministry's just going to surrender to him?" shouted Sirius incredulously. "They're not going to attempt to mount a counter offensive?"

"No, Voldemort has them backed into the corner, they feel the situation is hopeless and nothing can sway them from their decision," said Flamel, who looked rather agitated with the entire situation.

"There's one hope, I have to go back and finish him off for good," said Harry as he attempted to pull himself to his feet, but he sank back down in the chair, still pained from the battle with his duplicate.

"Harry, how, you can't even stand, even you must see that there's no way," said Hermione. "Harry, please, don't do something stupid?"

"I have to fight him and finish this now," grunted Harry. "It's not going to happen again, I won't let it!"

"Harry, I doubt you could make it across this office in your condition," said Luna logically. "Unless there is some miracle cure for your condition, I don't think you'll be able to last even ten seconds, with the state you're in."

"I might have something that can help," supplied Flamel in a reluctant voice. "Now, Harry, you must understand the risks, this will either restore you back to full strength or it will cause your nervous system to slowly shut down, killing you."

"It's worth the risk," said Harry firmly and Flamel walked over towards a cabinet. In the days of Dumbledore, this is where his Pensieve was kept, but Flamel kept a small object, wrapped it a cloth. Flamel unrolled the cloth and Harry's eyes widened when he saw what Flamel had. "I thought the Philosopher's Stone was destroyed."

"About ninety percent of it was, but I kept this small piece handy for an emergency," said Flamel. "Now, the Elixir of Life is not meant to be consumed by an under-aged body, normally, there are exceptions. With your condition, there is a chance that you may be one of these exceptions, but there's a chance that you're not and the consequences can be fatal."

It's worth the risk," repeated Harry in a firm voice.

"Okay, if you're certain," said Flamel and Harry nodded curtly. "It will take a few minutes to prepare the Elixir."

Flamel walked off to an adjacent chamber off to his office and Harry's eyes widened.

"I should have known Voldemort would have tried something like this," said Harry suddenly. "I might not have committed those murders, but I enabled them in a way."

"What, Harry, what are you talking about?" asked Hermione with a frown.

"Remember when Voldemort said that I'd join him one way or another?" asked Harry and the others nodded. "And guess what, after all I've been threw, I still fell for it. Voldemort played me for a sucker, he knew I would not let one of my friends go alone, it wasn't the first time after all. How could I be so s..."

Harry was cut off when Luna kissed him directly on the lips which needless to say, caught him off guard. She backed off before Harry's brain had a chance to register what happened.

"Why did you do that?" asked Harry calmly, when he finally found his voice.

"Harry, you were about to call yourself stupid, something that I really disagree with," replied Luna in an equally calm voice. "You are many things, more then I came name, but stupid's not one of them. True, you might be reckless but that's part of life. You can't get anywhere without taking chances and some of them sadly fail to pay off."

"You kissed me," remarked Harry, he was surprised, also a bit angry with himself that he enjoyed it, how could he have let his guard down?

"Yes, that was my intention," answered Luna casually. "And I'd do it again, but that's neither here nor there, we can talk about that later."

Harry just stared before he turned to Luna, his mouth opened but Luna cut him off.

"I know, you're going to say that it's too dangerous for us to be anything but friends and a few other reasons that I'm sure you're cooking up in your brain as we speak, but you'll find that I'm don't care all that much," added Luna. "Now, once again, I can't have you distracted when you have to beat Voldemort, we'll have plenty of time to talk about this later, along with a couple of interesting theories that I have about you that I want you to verify."

Before this line of conversation, Flamel returned with a vial containing the Elixir of Life and Harry snatched it, before Flamel could attempt to advise him of the risks. In one gulp Harry downed the entire vial.

A minute, Harry sat there rigid, his eyes blank, before all of his injuries began to heal and soon, Harry was restored to a completely healthy state of body.

"I haven't felt this good since...well ever," said Harry, as he rose to his feet ready for action, before he looked at the wand he stole when he escaped. "You know, this wand doesn't really suit me, good thing I have a spare that I can pick up before I finish Riddle."

"Dumbledore's wand?" asked Sirius in an undertone and Harry nodded.

"Well technically, it would be my wand now," responded Harry but Hermione frowned.

"What if it was destroyed, I assumed you kept it at one of the office buildings?" asked Hermione.

"Good thing I didn't keep it there, in fact, I kept it in the one place that no one would ever look for an extremely powerful wand, the least magical place on earth, Number Four Privet Drive, in my old bedroom, under the stairs" said Harry before he walked off, a focused expression on his face, it was do or die, he had to kill Voldemort tonight.

Voldemort sat on his wooden throne, elevated over stairs, with a indifferent expression on his face. He was to meet with the Ministry of Magic representatives in an hour, where they would hand control of the Ministry over to him.

The doors blasted open and one of his many followers flew right to the ground, landing with a thud. Voldemort looked down and saw Harry Potter standing below him, a look of intensity etched on his face, not blinking, his eyes completely fixed at Voldemort.

"May I help you Potter?" asked Voldemort in an indifferent tone.

"I, Harry James Potter, challenge you, Tom Marvolo Riddle, to a magical duel to the death!" thundered Harry, as the walls of Voldemort's throne room shook but Voldemort responded with a high cold laugh.

"Please, don't embarrass yourself child, I've already beaten you," commented Voldemort. "Your twisted reflection has caused untold damage to the name Harry Potter and within the hour, the Ministry of Magic will be under my control. With all the assassins, all the murdered Death Eaters, all your resources, even with all the foreknowledge gained when you were blasted back in time by that freak accident, I still won."

"Found out about that, didn't you Riddle?" asked Harry. "Naturally, you weren't savvy enough to figure it out on your own, so like a cowardly cheat, you decided to break in my head and find the truth. Not that I'd expect much from a guy who has to hide behind a false name."

"Potter, you failed, I have nothing to prove, you can cease with all the attempts to bait me," said Voldemort.

"Shame, I was given you a chance to fight me like a man, but it just proves you are just a pathetic little boy, hiding his own sorrow at the fact that his mother was nothing but a rapist and his father was just a common Muggle, behind a campaign of being a Dark Lord, quite sad and quiet pathetic when you come down to everything," said Harry and Voldemort refused to move, so Harry thought a bit of deception would be in order "Plus, I've learn something since you rifled around

in my mind, I've figured out the one weakness in that little alleged invincible body of yours."

Voldemort's eyes snapped up and were focused on Harry. How could he have failed to make his body perfect? What could this boy have found out?

"Tell me Potter," demanded Voldemort softly.

"No," said Harry. "You have to beat me in a duel and I'll consider letting you in on the secret."

"How can I be certain that you're not lying, like you were with the Prophecy?" asked Voldemort.

"How can you be certain that I'm not?" argued Harry. "Still, you're right, I doubt that much can be accomplished by a duel, it's obvious that there is no way you can beat me in a fight to the finish."

"Potter, I will let that flippant remark slide and offer you one final chance to join me," said Voldemort and Harry rolled his eyes, Voldemort's obsession with him never ceased to amaze Harry. "Think about it, you have too much potential to be wasted."

"Riddle, my answer is the same it was the first time, absolutely not there is no way in hell that I'll ever join you," said Harry. "Now, last time, I was forced to play by your rules and it cost my friend her life. This time, we'll see how well you, the so called most feared dark wizard that ever lived, fair when you play by mine. Once again, I, Harry James Potter, challenge you, Tom Marvolo Riddle, to a duel to the death."

"So be it," answered Voldemort as he descended the stairs, wand out, as both wizards stared each other down, raising their wands, preparing to duel.

And that's it, with two more chapters to go. Sorry, but someone had to die (other than evil! Harry), and Blaise drew the short end of the stick. As for the reason why Harry was kept alive, well Voldemort will tell you all about his reasoning in the next chapter. That's the tease. And the sequel that may or may not

happen looks to be more twisted each time I think about it. Next chapter will be written when it's written.

Chapter Twenty Four: Clash

Harry and Voldemort stood face to face, staring each other down, bowing ever so slightly to each other, neither taking their eyes off of their opponent.

“Potter, you just had to escape, I was only planning to leave you alive along enough to appreciate the damage I’ve done to your name due to your duplicate and once you’ve realized that your friends have seen you nothing but a cold hearted killer, then I would have killed you quickly” replied Voldemort calmly. “Now, you have forfeited that quick execution and I’ll enjoy finishing you off at my leisure.”

“Shut up and duel,” said Harry shortly as both wizards raised their wand and Voldemort quickly sent a powerful puncturing curse right at Harry. Harry blocked it, before he pivoted around Voldemort to the side, not bothering to attack. Voldemort sent another lethal looking curse that Harry did not quite recognize but Harry once again moved, before he stood in front of Voldemort. Another attempted spell but Harry just casually deflected it back towards Voldemort.

“CRUCIO!” cried Voldemort but a shield appeared in front of Harry, the curse impacting it and Harry casually just moved over to the side, as Voldemort sent another curse, a flesh rotting curse, but Harry avoided the spell. “Potter, stand still and fight me like a wizard.”

Harry stood back and just motioned for Voldemort to take his best shot. Voldemort blasted a pure jet of black light but Harry summoned a pane of glass on a window to the side in front of him. The glass shattered, sending pieces in every which way, right towards Voldemort and Harry stood behind Voldemort. A loud bang and a jagged grey light moved towards Harry, but Harry put up a shield to block the attack. Harry circled Voldemort, holding his wand and Voldemort sent an orange ball of magical fire. Flicking his wrist, a wall of water put out Voldemort’s fire and Harry stepped to face Voldemort, before he motioned for him to come forward.

“AVADA KEDAVRA!” cried Voldemort, and the very familiar green light flew right towards Harry, but Harry calmly deflected it back at Voldemort. Voldemort’s eyes widened, what Potter did should have been impossible and Voldemort threw himself to the ground, the

Killing Curse flying over him, impacting the wall behind him. Harry circled around Voldemort, who got to his feet.

"Want to try that again, Riddle?" asked Harry quietly and Voldemort sent a jagged web of magical energy that would have ripped Harry to shreds, but Harry's shield blocked the impact, before he circled behind Voldemort, Voldemort sent another powerful dark spell that Harry avoided, using even more of his magic, while Harry only used what was necessary to avoid being hit.

"I will force you to fight, you insolent brat!" shouted Voldemort as he attempted to send a bone degeneration curse, but Harry blocked Voldemort's efforts once again. "Crucio!"

Harry watched the unforgivable come at him, before he deflected it right back at Voldemort and Voldemort shrieked in agony for a few seconds as he was impaled with his own weapon, before he threw off the power. Voldemort stood, hatred etched in his eyes and he flicked his hand, causing the ground underneath them to shake, before Harry staggered back, where he was knocked off of his feet, as he allowed the wand to fly from his hand. Harry pulled himself back to a standing position and Voldemort magically lifted Harry off the ground, before Harry was rammed right into the wall. Voldemort lifted Harry off the ground and violently flung him across the room once again, Harry crashing down with a thud on the ground, as Voldemort stood up for him, before impacting Harry hard again, causing a glassy eyed look to appear in the eyes of the Boy-Who-Lived-Twice.

"Not as ready to defeat me as you would have liked me to believe, Potter," taunted Voldemort, as he viciously pulled the semi-conscious form of Harry, so they were face to face. "However, if nothing else, you will find that I am a fair man, so tell me what you've found out about the imperfection in my body, should it exist of course."

"You'll have to pull the truth from my mind Riddle, because I'm not going to tell you anything," said Harry in a weak voice and Voldemort quickly pushed his way into Harry's mind, searching for the information.

Voldemort screamed in agony before he pulled out of Harry's mind, the boy had attempted to destroy his mind with some kind of

advanced dark magic, the likes of which even the Dark Lord had never seen. Quickly, Voldemort pointed his right arm, wand in hand, but his arm trembled, the wand dropping to the ground. Angrily, he reached down and picked up his wand, attempting to aim it, but once again his right arm trembled, the wand dropping to the ground.

Harry looked up with a smirk, as while the mind shredding curse did not completely destroy Voldemort's mind, it did damage it enough to force him to be unable to properly hold a wand and thus eliminated the Unforgivables, the only three curses that could not be done at all without a wand, as they required too much power. The Boy-Who-Lived picked up the wand and stood to face Voldemort, as he watched Voldemort's attempt to use his left arm to aim his wand also

"What did you do to me Potter?" demanded Voldemort in an angry voice but Harry just responded with a high cold laugh to match Voldemort's. "Answer me, Potter."

Voldemort wandlessly blasted dark curse after dark curse after Harry, the loss of the ability to use a wand was the biggest offense one could do against a wizard. Harry calmly deflected each spell, but Voldemort's attacks raising in intensity with each attack, getting more violent as well. Spinning his arm, a large burst of blue light engulfed the room and dozens of holographic duplicates of Harry surrounded Voldemort. Voldemort flicked his wrist, blasting each of the duplicates with violent dark magic attacks. They burst into flames, but Harry kept out of the way, forcing Voldemort to keep firing off attacks. With each attack, Voldemort's ire began to raise, as a result, he subconsciously pushed himself to put even more magic into the attacks, and even with the stronger body, Harry suspected that even Voldemort had his own limits.

"Potter, show yourself, stop hiding behind these illusions!" shouted Voldemort, as one of the magical holographic duplicates was ripped to shreds, the destroyed magic flying in every which direction, before Harry dropped them, as he was in perfect position for his first attack

A large burst of gold was blasted right at Voldemort, the same spell that was used to obliterate Mad-Eye Moody. Voldemort shrieked, as while the spell did not reduce him into dust, it did burn off most of his

skin. The Dark Lord turned to Harry, rotted, burned skin, clinging to Voldemort's skeleton. Before Voldemort could attack him, Harry blasted him with another vicious spell, a sharp dagger encased in a bolt of grey magical energy, impacting Voldemort's chest. Harry fired two more spells at rapid succession at Voldemort, if he hit Voldemort with enough magic, as Flamel had theorized during his futile attempts to create something to destroy Voldemort, he would discharge Voldemort's spirit from this new body.

The smell of rotted filled Harry's nostrils as he watched it slowly heal, but Harry quickly sent a wall of fire at Voldemort. A flesh rotting curse was impacted seconds later, as Voldemort was backed off, before Harry aimed. Voldemort slammed hard against the wall and Harry slashed his wrist, impacting Voldemort with a vicious slicing curse. Voldemort stood, attempting to raise his arm, to fight back but Harry impacted Voldemort right in the face with a bone shattering curse. Voldemort's skin began to heal, but Harry concentrated, drawing all of the magic that he could in to himself.

"SECTUMSEMPRA!" shouted Harry, as Voldemort's newly healed skin was cut, blood dripping to the floor as Voldemort was enraged to see his own blood. Another blast of gold light cracked against Voldemort, before Harry circled Voldemort quickly, wrapping up his deadly adversary in thick metal cords. Voldemort attempted to pull his way out, but Harry quickly sent a burst of magically created electricity right through the cords. The pain was evident on the face of Voldemort, as he was electrocuted for about a half a minute, before he ripped his way out of the hold, the magical backlash causing Harry to fall back. Fortunately, he rebounded quickly and pulled himself to his feet, to face a burned, bleeding, and quite angry Voldemort.

Voldemort raised his arm and sent the gold light right at Harry. The light impacted Harry and Voldemort watched with glee as Harry evaporated in mid air before his eyes when the curse struck him.

"At last!" hissed Voldemort but his triumph was short lived as he was blasted from behind. Voldemort slowed his movement, before he landed on his feet and turned to see Harry standing behind him, looking unhurt. "How did you survive that, Potter?"

“Like I’d blab all my secrets to you, Riddle,” replied Harry and Voldemort spotted his wand, with the hope that whatever Potter did to him had faded, as he reached for it, picking it up, but in an instant Voldemort dropped it. Angrily, he conjured acid and sprayed it right towards Harry. Harry avoided and acid completely ate through the floor where Harry stood and Voldemort was caught with another disintegration curse, Harry pushing as much power as he could without collapsing exhaustion and the wand seemed to draw latent magic from the air around him.

The gold light lit up Voldemort like a Christmas tree, burning his robes off and his skin mostly removed. A skeletal figure with scattered bits of flesh that was rotting by the second clinging onto his bones, stood to face Harry, waiting for the skin to heal itself back over but nothing. Voldemort gave a loud shriek, somehow, some way, strained his body, forcing to heal itself too many times and this was the result.

“Looks like you met your limit, Riddle,” replied Harry, as he moved in for the kill, but Voldemort quickly and recklessly began to blast Harry with every curse that he could manage. The throne room began to crumble and Harry quickly blasted his way through the wall and exited.

From the outside, Harry watched as the entire room caved in right onto Voldemort’s head. For the briefest second, Harry retained the hope that Voldemort, in a misplaced fit of rage, had killed himself by bringing the entire throne room down on him. Unfortunately, that could not be so easy for Harry, as Voldemort blasted his way back out, coming out of the wreckage. Harry dodged before he shot solid ice from his wand but Voldemort quickly melted it with a fireball. Water dripped to the ground as Voldemort extended his hand forward, tiny bits of flesh hanging off of the bones by the barest of threads. Harry barely deflected a high level blast but this allowed Voldemort to emit a large sonic vibration spell. The ringing took Harry off balance and he quickly put a bubble headed charm on to block it out, but the damage already been down, as it had knocked Harry to the ground. Voldemort jabbed his hand, puncturing the bubble headed charm around Harry’s head, as Harry looked up, before he was blasted, skidding across the ground.

Voldemort stepped forward, staring right down at Harry, charred, rotting bits of his face clinging to his skull, as he looked down at Harry, before the platinum spirals appeared in front of Voldemort. Voldemort turned to put the finishing touches on the Boy-Who-Lived, but his shaking arm had prevented him from properly aiming. The platinum spirals pushed their way towards Voldemort, as he struggled to keep them back.

Harry watched, pulling himself to his feet, blood dripping from his ears, as Voldemort attempted to send the magical disruption spell at him but needless to say, Harry had other ideas.

“Accio, Riddle,” commented Harry and Voldemort was roughly pulled forward, right into the platinum spirals.

A loud, high shriek could be heard from miles around and Voldemort continued to scream, as the botched magical disruption spell caused by the own unique properties Voldemort’s body caused his own magic to inward against him, shredding through his internal organs. His bones burst into thick, black flames as Voldemort attempted reach towards Harry, his flaming hands extended, looking right into Harry’s eyes but Harry stepped backwards, watching Voldemort’s body slam to the ground, ashes flying in every direction, with Voldemort’s skull laying in the pile.

“Finally,” said Harry in a relieved voice but as soon as he said this, high cold laughter echoed through Harry’s ears. The laughter taunted Harry and Harry attempted to put a silencing charm up to block it out, but it continued. This lead Harry to the conclusion that the laughter came from inside his own head. “Riddle, I’m rather amused by the lengths you’ll go to cheat death.”

“Yes,” hissed the voice of Voldemort from inside Harry’s head. “Your body, with a few rituals to strengthen its durability, will be perfect to continue my campaign, as soon as I shut you out for good Harry.”

“I won’t let you take control of my body that easily Riddle, I’m not some weak minded fool that you can easily possess,” thought Harry but a small sigh could be heard from within his mind.

“Actually, this is my body,” commented a younger, but irritated, voice from within Harry’s mind

“Great, who let you out of the box?” thought the older Harry. “You’ve caused me enough trouble, attempting to influence me, prodding me towards these reckless situations, that’s what cost Blaise her life.”

“Oh like you care,” replied the younger version of Harry. “If you had your way, you’d be in a cave somewhere, writing bad poetry about the misfortunes in your past life.”

“Yes, that’s right, he’s the reason that you can’t have a proper relationship with anyone because he’s afraid of the past, afraid of loss, he’s bitter,” commented Voldemort directing his thoughts towards the younger part of Harry. “Together we can cast him out, you can have everything you want, and more.”

“You keep out of this, Riddle!” shouted the older Harry.

“As much as I hate him, he as a point,” said the younger Harry.

“He’s trying to pit us against each other, so he can take control,” argued the thoughts of the older Harry.

“Well I’m against you, so fuck you!” echoed the thoughts of the younger Harry. “And I picked up that little attitude from you, you were a bad influence in every way. And your little mental wounds from what happened in the past time line, you tried to shut me out whenever you could.”

“Because of situations like the one happened to Blaise, I should have found a way to shut you out permanently,” responded the older Harry. “I would have defeated Voldemort a long ago, but I had to deal with childish wants like having friends from you. Friends could have been made after I was finished, but you just had to have your way.”

“No, the problem is you are bitter, you refuse to get over what happened,” said the younger Harry. “You’ve taken over my body and from every minute from then, you attempted to rule my life, well I’m about sick and tired of it. You’ve bullied me for too long, it’s what you want.”

"We can settle this later when we get Voldemort out of my head," hissed the older Harry and the younger version of the Boy-Who-Lived seemed rather angry of the choice of words used by the older one.

"Yes, see how immature and foolish he is, I must have been foolish to think that he would be worth talking to, he must have been the one that caused to not accept all those offers to join me," commented Voldemort.

"I'll get you out of my head for good, Riddle!" echoed the thoughts of the older Harry Potter, as he removed a gun before he pointed it right for his temple, but a small amount of hesitation was evident. "Stop fighting me for control, I'm ending this right now, there's no reason for me to keep living."

"No, I'm not going to let you do this," said the younger Harry. "Stop, think about our friends..."

"They'll get over it," responded the older Harry dismissively as he attempted point the gun to his temple but the younger Harry refused to let the older version do the deed. "This has to be done, for the greater good."

"Okay, Albus," replied the younger Harry and this caused the gun to drop to the ground. "That's exactly who you are turning into, you're nothing but a bitter, manipulative coward, the fact that I could have turned into rather disturbing!"

"Don't you dare compare me to Dumbledore," hissed the angry thoughts of the older Harry.

"I will because you've turned into him, you only care about the mission, defeating Voldemort at all costs, no matter how many innocents you take out along the way," said the younger version of Harry.

"I once thought like that and that's why they were killed," thought the older Harry bitterly. "Now, I see everything clearly."

"As do I, you only care about yourself," responded the younger Harry.

"I cared, but I find that it's easier to let go when I shut off my emotions," said the older Harry. "Trust me, you can love someone, but the moment they get ripped away from you, it's like a part of your body is removed. That's why it's just better to not care at all."

"GET OUT OF MY HEAD, BOTH OF YOU!" thought the younger Harry angrily. "Especially you, you're the reason I'm so emotionally stunted and I refuse to bend to your will and Riddle, out as well."

"You aren't going to get rid of me that easily Potter, either of you!" hissed Voldemort but Harry concentrated as hard as he could, pushing back against Voldemort and a loud angry hiss was heard, as Harry felt the essence of Voldemort being ejected from his body.

Finally, Voldemort had been defeated.

"As for you," thought the younger Harry, as he directed his thoughts to the older Harry. "I'm showing you the door."

"No, you can't, we beat Voldemort," said the older Harry in a resigned voice, but attempting to reason with himself was a very difficult

"You don't belong here, you belong in that alternate time stream and maybe now since Voldemort's been defeated, you can go on to the other side," responded the thoughts of the younger Harry calmly. "Now, go, I've studied all your memories, I know everything you do, there is nothing else I can learn from you and I'd like to be able to make my own decisions without your bitterly influenced input."

"No, you don't get it, I'm not leaving, you need me," responded the older Harry. "Besides, you'll stuck with me, as I'm pretty certain that if I leave, the magical strain on your body will kill you."

The younger Harry shifted through his mind, using an advanced, but very difficult, Occlumency technique that had been used in the past to ease young children who had suffered a horrific trauma.

"There, now I can get on with my life and you're in a small part of my brain, isolated from the rest of it," said Harry. "I don't have to deal with you ever again but perhaps you can heal from what happened in that past timeline."

At that moment, footsteps could be heard and Harry stood calmly, as a small group of Ministry officials flanked with Aurors approached. He had an emergency Portkey on him, but something told Harry that he had to stick around. The group rose and saw Harry standing right behind a pile of ashes.

“POTTER!” yelled Scrimgeour angrily, as he pointed his wand at Harry, but Minister Weaver stepped to the side.

“Auror Scrimgeour, I don’t care how angry you are that Mr. Potter murdered your daughter, proper Ministry Auror protocol must be followed as with any situation,” commented Weaver in a testy voice. “Harry James Potter, you have been officially accused of slaying several students at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. It would be highly advisable to surrender your wand and not resist, as it might reduce your sentence. Otherwise, we will have to use force to bring you to justice.”

Scrimgeour seemed to wish he was given an excuse to use force, but several other Aurors stepped in front of the Ministry officials just in case Potter began to attack like a cornered rabid animal.

“Might I ask who told you that I was here?”

“We had no idea you were here, in fact we were to come here to surrender the Ministry to You-Know-Who,” remarked Tonks, one of the Aurors on guard, who looked rather disapproving of the entire situation .

“Yes, but since you’re in the league with him, you can tell us where he is,” said one of the Aurors in a tempered voice.

“Well, he’s right in front of me,” commented Harry calmly, as he pointed to the pile of ashes that was once the body of Voldemort.

“You killed him, Mr. Potter?” asked Weaver but Harry shook his head.

“What I fought today died fifteen years ago, but refused to accept his fate by doing everything in his power to cling onto life,” said Harry. “Once again, I had to save your pathetic posteriors, but no need to thank me, it’s not like any of you came close to doing anything about

Voldemort, in fact you were about to lay down and hand the Ministry over to him. So in a way, the Ministry of Magic is in my debt.”

“Can it Potter, you murdered countless, you think you’re going to get off for just knocking off He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named?” challenged Scrimgeour.

“Most likely Potter wanted more power, so he wiped out his only possible competition,” muttered another Auror, but Harry just calmly withdrew a remote control device that was strapped to his sleeve.

“You will let me go and drop all the charges against me,” replied Harry and several of the Aurors and Ministry Officials looked appalled at the audacity of Harry Potter. “Or the entire wall between the Muggle and Magical Worlds comes crashing down right before your very eyes.”

“There’s no way you can do that to us, Mr. Potter, we’ll erase whatever damage you’ve done, so you have no leverage to stand on,” said one of the Ministry officials in a diplomatic voice, but Harry just raised his eyebrow. While he didn’t agree with his bitter older counterpart with most things, he did share his distaste for the Ministry and the need to constantly put them in their collective places on a constant basis.

“Allow me to explain, before you do something stupid, this remote control device activates a very advanced satellite system that overrides every television and radio signal, that broadcasts undisputed proof that magic exists,” said Harry, as he held the remote, his finger inches away from the button. “Cost me a fair bit of pocket change, I believe several hundred galleons, but it was worth it.”

The Aurors began to point their wands so Harry decided to quickly inform them of another useful feature he had keyed inside the remote.

“And just a fair warning, do something predictable like attempt to destroy the remote with magic the signal automatically gets set off,” warned Harry. “So, I would suggest that you put your wands on the ground and back off or the signal is activated.”

Casually, Harry fired a stunner behind his back to an Auror who attempted to creep behind his back. The Auror dropped to the ground.

"You're bluffing Potter," said the Auror known as Dawlish but that just prompted Harry to roll his eyes.

"Go to Azkaban and talk to Bartemius Crouch, to find out whether or not I'm bluffing," replied Harry, only the voice of "Barone" came out of his mouth and the Aurors looked confused, but a couple of them seemed to be putting the pieces together. "That's right, one in the same, but you'll never get to know how, not that most of you would ever understand if I explained in small words. Now drop the wands or I'll introduce a bigger cataclysm for you than what Voldemort was planning."

Several wands dropped to the ground, both from the Ministry representatives and Aurors. Scrimgeour retained his wand for a few seconds, before the Minister prompted him to do so, as Harry's had his finger nearly on the button on the remote. Reluctantly, as he looked at Harry with great distaste etched in his eyes, the Head Auror's wand dropped to the ground.

"Just answer me one question, Mr. Potter," said an elderly Ministry official. "Why did you kill all of those students? Surely, you owe the Ministry an explanation, if anything else."

Harry had a very long day and despite not being as bitter as the older version that resided in his body for almost ten years, he still had his tolerance limits. The fact that the Ministry thought he owed them anything after he saved them from being under Voldemort's foot had overshot those limits.

"I did not kill them, an evil duplicate created by Voldemort to frame me murdered all those students, I'm sorry all those people died, but you know what, I don't have to justify anything to anyone in the Ministry!" snapped Harry his eyes blazing with an insane amount of intensity. "You know what, the entire Ministry of Magic can fuck off, the next time there's a Dark Lord in this country, have fun, because I'm sure is hell not bailing your arses out again. Voldemort's finished, I don't owe the Ministry or most of Wizarding Britain for that matter shit, so fuck off and have a nice life!"

With that, Harry activated his Portkey and left without another word, leaving the group of Aurors and Ministry Officials staring at where he once stood, in various states of shock

Bit short, but rather important. One final chapter and A Twisted Timeline will be completed. I'm going to try to get it ready for this weekend, but no promises. And for the record, I really enjoyed writing this chapter, but I just have this feeling that the final chapter might seem to be a bit anti-climatic, but necessary all the same to end the story and bridge towards a potential sequel.

Chapter Twenty Five: Rebuilding

Days had passed since the attack on Hogwarts and the students had tried to get back normally, but it was difficult to, especially for the surviving Ravenclaws. After seeing one of their own slay nearly half their house before their very eyes, it was difficult to care about such things as schoolwork for the foreseeable future. Outside of the house, many had Ravenclaws who were family members and the stories about the viciousness of the attack had gotten more sensational as they were told. Such was how rumors traveled at Hogwarts and even more rumors traveled about after the attack, Harry Potter had killed He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named. Many felt this did not clear him from his crimes, most likely he got a taste of power and felt Voldemort would be better served as the servant, than the master. The fight ensued and the Dark Lord was killed. Others, most the few who were lucky not to have family and friends killed, thought it was an ingenious master plan on the part of Harry, to gain Voldemort's trust. That way he could easily have finished off Voldemort and the only thing that he would sacrifice was his own reputation.

"Most of the Gryffindors are talking about how Harry's lost his mind and gone dark," said Neville, as he walked through the corridors with Luna and Hermione.

"Well, I got the impression that most of Gryffindor were not fond of Harry, because his guardian was at odds with Dumbledore, who might as well be a saint within that house and their one dimensional view of good and evil," commented Luna. "Also, the fact that they all thought that Harry would be one of them, because of who they think he is. So they would be more apt to believe any of the tales about him. It's saddened, that duplicate did fair bit of damage to his name."

"It does look bad though, everyone else was knocked out by the duplicate, before the real Harry showed up and there doesn't seem to be may witnesses to what really happened," said Hermione. "Still, he's beaten Voldemort, this time for good."

"Yes, he might have killed the Dark Lord, but The Dark Lord scored the ultimate defeat against Potter," said the snide voice of Draco Malfoy, as he walked onto the scene, right in front of the group.

"I thought the air just had become foul in here," commented Hermione, wrinkling her nose slightly at the sight of Draco.

"You know, I thought for a minute that Potter might have wised up and abandoned all you Mudblood and blood traitor trash when he staged an attack on the school on behalf of the Dark Lord," replied Draco snidely, not bothering to acknowledge what Hermione said. "But, I then heard that Potter didn't have the spine to completely finish what he started, so he attacked the Dark Lord, in an attempt to salvage his mangled reputation. Pathetic that he cares what the wastex of the Wizarding World thinks about him but not that it matters now, as most think he's a murderous bastard."

"What's really pathetic is that you think your comments hold any relevance to anyone, Malfoy," said Luna calmly. "I feel less intelligent just by hearing your voice, so I suggest you leave."

"You can deny that Potter's reputation is in shambles all you want, but he had a chance for power and he blew it," replied Draco pompously, as he made his way off.

"I really thought that'd him being sorted into Hufflepuff would have eliminated some of his more egotistical tendencies," said Hermione sadly but Luna just shook her head.

"That's a nice theory, but unfortunately it didn't work out as well as we would have liked it too," said Luna wisely. "Few things do, such is the nature of life."

"Harry knows that better than anyone," muttered Hermione to herself, as she walked a bit forward, deep in thoughts, wondering where Harry was right now. All she and the others learned through the brief letter that Harry had given them that he was alive and safe, but did not want to give any further details, in the off chance that the communication was intercepted.

The Ministry of Magic was in an uproar, to say the least. Minister Weaver wanted nothing better than a long vacation and a nice, large, bottle of firewhiskey, as he had to listen which was about the forty third or so Howler in the last three hours, give or take a few as quite frankly he lost count. The story printed by the Daily Prophet about the

Ministry ready to concede the Ministry to Voldemort easily, taking them to task for not attempting to find a way to eliminate Voldemort years ago before he gained too much power, had raised the ire of a good portion of the Wizarding World. Many were appalled and a few people had resigned from the Ministry in protest. Most notably was Madam Amelia Bones, who was absolutely enraged that this would be considered, especially without the consent of the Wizengamot. Weaver held no ill will towards those who were angry, but also felt that if they had been in his shoes, they would have had a different outlook on the entire situation.

"Enter," prompted Weaver in a weary tone of voice, and the door creaked open allowing Rufus Scrimgeour to enter inside. "Ah yes, Rufus, have a seat."

"You wanted to see me Minister?" inquired Scrimgeour in a gruff tone, as he looked at Weaver.

"Yes I did Rufus, now, I want to ensure that you are committed to lead the Auror Department to round up any remaining Death Eaters that are still out there but also that you understand that this Potter matter should be left alone for the time being, until we have a way to bring him in, without endangering our entire existence being broadcasted to Muggles," said Weaver in a serious voice.

"Minister, every second Potter is out there, is a second that we risk even more innocent people being murdered, just like my daughter was," argued Scrimgeour. "He's insane and dangerous, especially judging by his attempts to babble on about a clone or some such rubbish and trying to convince us that him and Barone are one in the same. We should nail Barone as well."

"In time, Rufus, we'll revisit this entire manner," said Weaver in a curt voice. "It would be prudent to reevaluate our options and try to neutralize this threat through more discrete channels. Corner Potter and he will lash back out at us, mark my words. As for Barone, I doubt him and Mr. Potter are one in the same, it just doesn't make sense, as Barone showed up on the scene when Potter was six years old."

“So you’ll just going to let Potter run wild,” commented Scrimgeour in an agitated tone of voice and Weaver just looked at him seriously.

“Actually, I think it might be best if you took some time off, Rufus,” suggested Weaver, the last thing he wanted, was another scandal for the Daily Prophet to have a field day with. “With everything that has been occurring, it might not be for the best that you would lead a full length investigation of this magnitude. You’ll still get paid but for the best, you should not be working, having time to properly grieve and get your life back together.”

“Fine, Minister,” responded Scrimgeour in a gruff voice as he rose to depart, but Weaver stood up as well.

“And Rufus, I would hate to put one of our most respected veteran Aurors in Azkaban because he did actions outside of the Ministry jurisdiction,” warned Weaver. “I sympathize with your grief, but at the same time, as Minister of Magic, it would be unethical for me to condone any attacks outside of Ministry regulation.”

Scrimgeour just turned and walked from the Minister’s office. Weaver rose to his feet and left as well, for a meeting with Headmaster Flamel.

At Hogwarts, in the corridors, Hermione walked back from the library, in a bit of a distracted mood, when she saw Ron Weasley.

“Hermione!” shouted Ron and Hermione just kept walking, she wanted nothing to do with the younger Weasley at all, she found him to be nothing but petty, immature, and rather simplistic in his views on life. “Hey, listen, how you holding up after...you know what happened?”

Hermione just stood there, silent, not bothering to acknowledge the existence of the youngest Weasley brother.

“I understand if you don’t want to talk about it, but I think I know why Harry went insane and attacked the school,” continued Ron and Hermione just turned her back coolly from Ron, who obviously didn’t get the hint. “Well, all that time he spent in the library must have

warped him, in addition not to playing much Quidditch. He was bound to go insane, sad really.”

“You really think you have the measure of Harry,” remarked Hermione frostily.

“Well, yeah, he was my best mate,” said Ron and Hermione was amused, in the morbid sense, at Ron’s delusional and quite distorted views on reality. “Seriously, the only way he would have been worse if he had been sorted into Slytherin, but thank Merlin he wasn’t, because who knows how bad the massacre would have been.”

“Really,” commented Hermione coolly. “Well you should know about Slytherins, considering that you are one. You know, I really shouldn’t be left alone with you, because you were the one who said that all Slytherins were evil.”

“Wait, no, I didn’t...I mean...not me, the Sorting Hat made a mistake, putting me here,” stammered Ron idiotically but in his confusion, Hermione had slipped through a shortcut behind a tapestry and out of sight, as Ron was left alone to stammer stupidly in the middle of the hallway.

Luna sat quietly underneath the shade underneath a tree close to the lake to be left alone with her, to an extent disjointed, thoughts. Harry had survived and beaten Voldemort, but it was to expected as far as Luna was concerned as she never doubted for one moment he would fail this time. It was sad that most of the Wizarding World had seen Harry as a cold blooded murderer thanks to the efforts of Voldemort and the evil duplicate. Of course, the people who would not attempt to find the truth, but rather latch onto the easiest solution possible, to blame Harry for what had happened. In her mind, that trivialized what happened to the victims and in the end, they were used as cannon fodder in the Ministry of Magic’s never ended mission to make sure everyone toes the line of what they think the world should have been.

“Luna?” prompted a very familiar voice and Luna turned around to see Ginny standing there. It was curious, as they had not spoken much, if at all, since their second or third year at the latest, so it was a bit peculiar that she was talking to her now.

"Hello Ginny, I must say it's been a while since we've spoken to each other," remarked Luna cordially, after all, it was best not to be rude.

"Can you believe it, Harry going dark like that?" asked Ginny in a disbelieving voice. "I mean, he's the last person I thought would be joining You-Know-Who, after all, he's the Boy-Who-Lived! It's just a shame, he gave in that easily, but I heard that he might have had second thoughts of what he did, when he killed You-Know-Who. Doesn't erase what Harry did, but still, I'm not sorry to see him gone."

Luna just hummed casually, just listening to what Ginny said. While Luna once considered Ginny as a friend, it was sad to see that she had fallen into the same one-dimensional thinking that plagued most of the Wizarding World.

"He attacked you, though," said Ginny and Luna did not really feel like correcting Ginny, no doubt the truth would be something that she would shrug up as a theory of Luna's. "I don't know how you managed to get out of that one alive, maybe, that's when he came to his senses. I just wish...that I would have been more assertive when it came to Harry."

"What would this have had to do with what happened?" questioned Luna, even though she already suspected what Ginny had believed.

"Well, if we had been together, he might not have turned evil, as he would have had someone that he could talk to," replied Ginny. "I mean, you know we were meant to be together, and I heard rumors that you and Harry might be together, but naturally I'd know that'd never happen. No offense Luna, but you would be a bit too radical for him, Harry needed someone who would keep him balanced, on the right path, on the path of right."

"Interesting Ginny," said Luna calmly. "I would have thought you would have outgrown this infatuation with what was basically a storybook fantasy a long time ago, but sadly I was mistaken."

"What are you saying Luna?" demanded Ginny.

"I'm saying that maybe, just maybe, you might have had more of a chance of impressing Harry had not continuously attacked like a star

struck fan girl in his presence,” said Luna slowly and calmly, so Ginny could register each word. “The stars that you had in your eyes blinded you to what was going on right in front of your face. If not, you would have known that Harry was nothing like you had wanted him to be.”

“I see what happened, YOU STOLE HIM FROM ME!” shouted Ginny angrily, but Luna just sat there, calmly, looking at Ginny. “I can’t believe that Luna, you of all people, you knew I liked him...”

“For your information, I stole nothing from you, Ginevra,” responded Luna coolly.

“Bullshit, yes you did, Harry and I were destined to be together!” shouted Ginny, who seemed mad, beyond all reason. “Mum told me since I was a little girl that one day that I would marry Harry Potter and we’d live happily ever after.”

“Did you ever bother to think that your mother had an ulterior motive for inspiring these thoughts in your mind?” asked Luna calmly, but a small, tiny amount of irritation was appearing underneath her calm exterior. “Or perhaps by someone else, given what has come out about Dumbledore?”

“Luna, how dare you say that my love for Harry was planted in my mind by someone else!” shrieked Ginny, who had her wand pointed at Luna. “Come on Luna, get up, we can settle this right now, after you stole my Harry!”

“No, I don’t think that will be an acceptable idea, I have nothing to gain by fighting you,” said Luna, with a slight roll of her eyes, as she watched the sparks materialize at the end of Ginny’s wand, just a few inches away from the bridge of her nose.

“Fight me, in fact, it’s your fault that Harry went dark, because you kept him away from me!” yelled Ginny, who was so angry she burst into tears.

“Might I ask what is going on here?” asked the voice of Professor McGonagall.

"Young Miss Weasley seems to be under the mistaken impression that I stole Harry away from her, when the fact that Harry's barely even acknowledged her existence," responded Luna in a dignified voice.

"YOU DID STEAL HIM, YOU BITCH!" yelled Ginny but McGonagall was quick to calm the storm.

"Miss Weasley, to my office, we're going to have a chat about your temper," said McGonagall in a stern voice that caused even Ginny to back down in fear. "Right this way, I'll be with you once I've had a word with Miss Lovegood."

Ginny smiled at Luna, but Luna paid her no mind, before she walked off to the school. McGonagall turned to Luna slowly and even Luna felt a bit intimidated when McGonagall had "that look" on her face.

"Ten points to Ravenclaw for not retaliating with force, especially under these circumstances," said McGonagall. "And for the record, regarding a certain matter, Professor Flamel has informed the staff of the truth of what happened recently. And while it does seem a little far fetched, it does make sense once putting everything into perspective. While I only know about two other staff members for certain, I for one believe the story and next time you find yourself in contact with him, give Mr. Potter my regards."

"Of course Professor McGonagall," commented Luna, as she went back to be alone with her thoughts.

In truth, she was not angry with anything Ginny said. Rather Luna pitied her and hoped that one day, Ginny would find a way separate her delusions from reality. It was a shame, really, that she wasted her childhood pining over an idealized vision that truly did not exist. It was quite fortunate that it was Luna that Ginny said those things to. Had it been Hermione, Hermione might have responded back with an equally venomous diatribe or perhaps a few well placed hexes, depending on her mood. And if Blaise was still here, Luna shuddered to think what might have happened, had Blaise heard what was said. They'd be hauling Ginny off to the hospital wing in pieces.

Still, Harry should have been sitting with her right now, but instead he was lying low. Luna reasoned that she would have to find some way to get in touch with him soon.

In the Headmaster's office, Flamel sat behind his desk, finishing writing a letter. He heard a knock on his door and he quickly slid it out of sight.

"Come in, Minister Weaver," prompted Flamel and the Minister entered, looking as he had aged about fifty years in the last few years, sitting down in front of the Headmaster's desk. "Now, I allowed your Aurors to inspect the school, so what is this about?"

"The Board of Governors had word of Mr. Potter's little escapade here and wants you to step down as Headmaster as an act of good faith to the parents of those students who were killed," said Weaver but Flamel did not look all that bothered.

"Just as well, considering I'll be dead in a few days anyway," said Flamel casually, as if dying was an every day occurrence. "I didn't know when I could drop that into the conversation casually, so thanks for you giving me the opening."

"You're....welcome," said Weaver tentatively.

"Yes, tonight we'll be having a large feast to celebrating the fact that I'll be dying or I suppose the fact that Voldemort's dead as well, as that's a matter worth celebrating as well," said Flamel. "And then, off to St. Mungos, until I'm due for my long over due appointment with the Grim Reaper."

"So, we'll put McGonagall in until we find a more steady replacement," suggested Weaver.

"Whatever you prefer, and also, you might want to find a new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher as well," said Flamel casually. "Sirius Black and Remus Lupin have agreed to teach until a replacement can be found, I'd hate to lose them, but they've been both disenchanted with remaining at Hogwarts given recent events."

"I can see that, it would be very difficult to show one's face if the son of two of your best friends had turned dark and attempted to murder the school," said Weaver. "And yes Flamel, the boy brought up the clone thing as well, but no magic as far as I know that could cause such a realistic duplication."

"What makes you certain that Voldemort wouldn't be inventive enough to attempt to create such a process?" asked Flamel but Weaver just shrugged.

"Unless this clone magically turns up, there is no way to prove this theory," said Weaver. "Yes, I'm well aware that should it exist, it could be in whatever's left of the Forbidden Forest, but the centaurs are already in an uproar about what happened in there and it's out our jurisdiction."

"Never stopped the Ministry before," muttered Flamel under his breath.

"As Minister, my hands are tied, we can ill-afford another scandal, even if it's something as miniscule as enraging the centaurs," said Weaver, who to an extent hated how political he had to act, but he had a duty as Minister of Magic to uphold the laws of Wizarding Britain, no matter how much he disagreed with him. "Also, Mr. Potter did not act like an innocent, he threatened to broadcast the existence of the Wizarding World to the Muggles if we didn't let him go."

"Did he do it?" asked Flamel and Weaver shook his head. "Well, it looks like you were lucky, to catch Mr. Potter on a good day. Now, Minister, if that's all, I really need to prepare for my death."

"Yes, of course," responded Weaver.

"And I better not get a fancy funeral, with a bunch of pompous Ministry suits pretending they were my close personal friends or I'll come back from the dead, to haunt you," said Flamel to the retreating back of Weaver, before he sealed what would be the final letter of his life. After that, he would make sure everything was ready for the feast and then it was time to set off to meet his maker.

Harry sat at Number Four Privet Drive, he had hoped he would never spend an extended amount of time at this place again, but at least it was only temporary until his bases of operation had been completely reconstructed. Thanks to the damage that was done with, it would take a couple of weeks to get everything back to Harry's liking, even with magic.

A soft knock brought Harry out of his thoughts.

"Come in," said Harry and the door pushed open, allowing a smiling Luna entrance. "Hi, Luna, nice to see you, it really is."

"Good morning Harry, I'd figured you might be here," responded Luna as she sat down on the chair right next beside Harry's. "How have you been lately?"

"As good as can be expected," said Harry. "I just thought I'd be in a better mood considering that Voldemort has been defeated."

"Perhaps if you could tell me exactly how you defeated him, then it would help you begin to put everything in perspective?" suggested Luna and Harry nodded, but he frowned.

"I don't know where to begin, but I suppose the beginning would help," said Harry and Luna nodded, patiently waiting for him to go on. "In a matter of speaking, I lived through all this before, well a version of me did anyway. A version of me who had seen way too much death that can be healthy, that was turned a bit bitter and only was fueled by revenge on Voldemort."

"Makes sense, please continue Harry," encouraged Luna with a smile.

"I was six years old when he came and when he came back, he asserted his control over my body," continued Harry. "At times, I must admit, his influence was a fairly decent thing, especially in those earlier years, I was content to stay quiet for the most part in the part of the mind that I was shoved in, in fact, most of the time, he had forgotten that I was there, only putting me off as a small echo, something that kept him from going too far I suppose but as I got older, I learned from his memories, I knew his friends and his enemies. He still was the dominant one, but I began to prod his

influence as much as I could be allowed to. The older version of me wanted to shut you all out when Voldemort returned, that way he could numb himself should any of you got killed.”

“You didn’t like that, did you?” asked Luna.

“Of course I didn’t like that, I had learned enough from his experiences to know what I didn’t want but still I was mostly contained. My sudden liberation, as ironic as it sounds, was thanks in part to Voldemort,” continued Harry. “I’m not sure how exactly this happened but the best I can figure is this. When we destroyed Voldemort’s physical body, he managed to somehow force his essence through the link created when he attempted to kill me on that night. The magic jarred me free and allowed me to take control. I had two of my least favorite people of the world in my head, Voldemort and my jaded potential future self and for once I could do something about it. Now, both of them were powerful adversaries that it took every bit of will power I had to throw off their possession. By all rights they should have silenced me for good.”

Harry took a deep breath.

“Yet, I beat them, I ejected Voldemort from my mind with what could basically be classified as an extremely powerful wandless exorcism spell, he hung on for dear life, but to be honest I really wanted him out of there, he defiled me and I’ve still haven’t felt clean enough, after the sixth shower I’ve took since then,” commented Harry, which caused Luna to snicker, in spite of herself. “It was impossible to get that corrupted shade of my future self out of my mind, but I used a rare bit of Occlumency to seal him inside an unused portion of my mind. Rather complicated, and I could have fried my brain, but thankfully I trapped him.”

“Thankfully,” agreed Luna.

“Despite all of what he put me through, I couldn’t have defeated Voldemort without him, but honestly I can’t put up with his jaded worldview any longer,” said Harry. “I just hope he finds solitude where I kept him, but despite all that, I think he was quite fond of all of his friends. Quite frankly, he hated that, he thought he was poison, and he fought especially hard to keep himself away from you Luna.”

“So I supposed that you must have been in a relationship with that alternate version of me,” concluded Luna perceptively. “Well what about you?”

Harry quickly leaned forward and kissed Luna briefly, before he pulled back.

“Answer your question, Luna?” asked Harry mischievously.

“I think so Harry, but I just wanted to make sure that wasn’t a figment of my overactive imagination, so may we get to our feet and face each other?” prodded Luna as she rose up and Harry quickly followed. After what he had been through, he knew that he had to seize the moment, as given the chaotic nature of life; there might not be another one.

Mutually, Harry and Luna came together for their first real kiss. No amount of description could do it justice, no amount of hyperbole could have actually described the feelings of both of the teenagers. After about a minute, they broke apart for oxygen.

“You know, having to breathe is annoying,” commented Luna casually and that both of them to shared a laugh, as they sat back down. “Well, I guess neither of us was imagining anything.”

“No, but I almost expected to hear cheesy, sappy music in the background when we slowly leaned forward,” said Harry and this caused Luna to break out into loud giggles, causing her to laugh so hard that tears rolled down her cheek, Harry joining her, as they both attempted to maintain their composure. This took several minutes, before Luna pulled out a folded up piece of parchment.

“Professor Flamel asked me to give you this note,” said Luna as she slid it over to Harry quietly unfolded it, before he read the note out loud.

Dear Harry

I thought it would be worth my time to take a few of the remaining moments of my life to write you a letter. Yes, my time is nearly done, as I depart from this Earth soon, perhaps several centuries later than

I should have. Yet I look forward to what awaits on the other side, as I daresay it may be much better than the shambled Wizarding World that you find yourself in as I write this. As hard as it to believe, at one time, the Ministry of Magic was an effective form of government, but then again, also at one time, I was a handsome young gentleman. Both those things have been harder to believe as time passed.

For the record, you are one of the few that actual give me hope that this world may be salvaged one day. Unfortunately, thanks to Riddle's little scheme, you may be judged as a pariah for quite some time. Do not let this ruin your life, the Ministry is not worth sinking into a depression over. Eventually, there may come a time where the Ministry is more willing to closely examine the facts. Still, be that as it me, knowing you was quite the interesting experience and I wish you nothing but the best of luck in your future endeavors in life.

On a lighter note, here's a line from my will that I'm sure you'll find rather amusing. "As for the Ministry of Magic, I leave nothing but my two middle fingers stuck high in the air."

Both Luna and Harry started cracking up at that little piece.

"Good old, Nicholas," said Harry. "Even in death, he gets one more key shot in at the Ministry.

So in conclusion, I need to prepare for my death. Good luck once again and I better not see you for at least a hundred years.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Flamel.

Harry looked and saw the small piece of the Philosopher's Stone taped to the bottom of the note.

PS: Here's the rest of the stone, yes, that's all of it, I swear. Destroy it or keep it safe for an emergency, the choice is yours

"So, how long can you stay?" asked Harry promptly.

“For another few minutes, I wish it could be longer though,” said Luna sadly. “Still, Mum wants me to get my O.W.Ls, but Dad approves of me just walking out of Hogwarts without warning one day. Still suppose I better listen to Mum.”

“Well, you do need something to fall back, if everyone in the Wizarding World goes insane and the Quibbler has to get put out of business,” said Harry.

“Yes and I would hate to have to beg my boyfriend to bail me out,” commented Luna but Harry just responded with a smirk.

“And what would he say if you were cheating on him with me?” asked Harry playfully.

“Well, he did defeat a really powerful dark lord not too long ago,” said Luna with a smile.

“You mean there was another one besides Voldemort running around?” inquired Harry in mock astonishment. “I must have not been paying attention.”

“Well Harry you’ve been known to zone out from time to time,” responded Luna. “Wrackspruts seem to be attracted to you moths to a flame.”

“Or me to you,” said Harry with a smile before he shook his head. “From defeater of a Dark Lord to a love struck teenager in days flat.”

“Must be a new record,” said Luna and Harry nodded. “Oh and by the way, yes, I’ll be your girlfriend, thanks for asking.”

“I was getting there,” said Harry.

“I know Harry, really, it’s just the Portkey does leave in two minutes and didn’t quite know when you would get around to it,” replied Luna. “Still, Harry, everything will be fine, this is not the end, but rather a new beginning.”

“Before I forget, did the Ministry ever even bother looking through the Forbidden Forest for my evil twin?” asked Harry but Luna shook her head.

“No, the centaurs aren’t too happy that you obliterated most of their forest,” said Luna.

“The centaurs are never happy,” remarked Harry. “Still, after everything...I hope I can move on and rebuild.”

“I know, Blaise is still weighing heavily on her conscious, Harry,” said Luna. “Still, you handled the situation the best you could, I suspect that if you could go back, you’d do things differently but Voldemort was the one who killed her. You have no need to blame yourself

Harry nodded, as Luna looked anxiously at the Portkey, as it flashed, given her the one minute warning.

“I’ll try and see you again soon, maybe with the others next time, but I don’t know when it will be,” said Luna as she wrapped her arms around Harry warmly in a hug, before their lips for one final kiss. As the Portkey began to blink, they reluctantly pulled apart from their passionate embrace. “See you later Harry, stay safe. I know everything will turn out okay.”

Harry stepped back, wishing that he could return to Hogwarts, but of course, that was out of the question.

“Bye Luna, see you real soon,” muttered Harry as he watched Luna leave, disappointed that she had to go.

“Took you long enough with her,” hissed Vinny from underneath Harry’s sleeve.

“Quiet you,” said Harry, as he prepared for the next stage of his life and hopefully he could rebuild his empire and to another extent, his life, from the ashes of the destruction caused by Voldemort.

It was nightfall at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, as a group of hooded figures appeared outside the Forbidden Forest, with artificially created fog masking their activities to those who looked

outside at that time. When it was clear that there were no centaurs nearby, they back to magically shift away the fallen trees, until they saw a pale and lifeless hand sticking out from the debris.

“We have what we seek,” remarked one of the figures in a magically distorted voice, as they proceeded to dig out the lifeless Harry Potter duplicate.

“The rumors were true, the Dark Lord has used our baseline work, no doubt passed on by Rookwood, and improved upon it to make this specimen,” said another one of the figures.

“We must depart, before this is found, no doubt it would be destroyed had anyone else located it and it can be of some use to our work,” commented a third figure.

“Indeed, the balance must be maintained and once we unlock the secrets of this duplicate, it shall be done, no longer will Muggles finding out of our world’s existence be a concern,” concluded the fourth figure, before they departed with the clone and the only piece of evidence that could clear Harry Potter’s name.

And that’s the end. As for the unnamed sequel, don’t expect to see one word of it until it’s completely written, but it will be clearly marked as a sequel. I will reveal while there will be a few rather dark parts, there will also be a distinct return to humor as well in many places, and a guy named Lou will be one of the main villains. Also, the several factions of the Zabini mob will be squabbling for power of the former empire, which will lead a few headaches for Harry once the leader of one side aligns themselves with a super natural force. And of course, more that I’m not going to reveal.

So thanks for reading a Twisted Timeline and I’m out.